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MINISTRY
OF
ANGELS

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The Ministry of Angels.

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THE SEPARATE STATE.

THE BOOK OF ESTHER.

Biblical Studies.

BY

GEORGE J. WALKER,

AUTHOR OF "MEDITATIONS ON THE SONG OF SOLOMON," ETC. ETC.

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The Ministry of Angels.

THE MINISTRY OF ANGELS.

THE divine principle of faith is beautifully illustrated in the testimony to Moses, that he "endured as *seeing him who is invisible.*" Thus also our Lord, speaking of his approaching departure, said to his disciples, "Yet a little while, and the world seeth me no more; *but ye see me.*" (John xiv. 19.) But beginning thus with its primary object, the person of the Son of God, faith does not rest here. By it we are made conversant with a wide sphere of invisible realities. It is in the most comprehensive sense "the evidence of things not seen." Amongst these the subject attempted to be treated of in this paper possesses a high degree of interest, although perhaps not sufficiently prominent in modern theology. The plan proposed is

to review a selection of passages that relate to it, by which means prominence is more likely to be given to the words of inspiration, and less risk will be incurred of the licence of fancy and speculation than in a more formal and artificial essay.

We will begin with the most ancient book of the Scriptures.

In Job xxxviii. 7, the Almighty speaks of the choir of angels that celebrated the creation of our globe:

> "When the morning stars sang together,
> And all the sons of God shouted for joy."

Not only in this beautiful passage, but also in chap. i. 6, they are called "sons of God:" "And there was a day when the sons of God came to present themselves before Jehovah." (See also ii. 1.) At appointed seasons, it would seem, they appear in the divine presence, probably both to pay homage, and to give account of their actions, and receive further instructions. That this is rather the record of an actual occurrence than a poetic ornament, as some have supposed it to be, may be inferred from there being no necessity to depart from the literal conception of

the statement, and from a comparison of other Scriptures. In 1 Kings xxii. 19-23, we have a parallel scene. The prophet saw "the Lord sitting on his throne, and all the host of heaven standing by him, on his right hand and on his left." Ahab's approaching doom is the subject of the heavenly council, and a spirit undertakes to entice him to his ruin by being "a lying spirit in the mouth of all his prophets."

In the sublime vision, Dan. vii. 9, etc., the prophet beheld "till the thrones (compare Rev. iv. 4) were set, and the Ancient of days did sit—thousand thousands ministered unto him, and ten thousand times ten thousand stood before him." Judgment is then executed on the little horn for the words spoken by him, and the heavenly host who are present at the awful session, we learn elsewhere (Rev. xix. 14-21), are also associated in the execution of the sentence.

To such a general assembly of angels as described in the above and other passages, the apostle seems to allude, Heb. xii. 23, καὶ μυριάσιν ἀγγέλων πανηγύρει, ye are come,—to myriads of angels, a general assembly.

The spirit that appeared to Eliphaz (
iv. 12, &c.) said,

"Shall man be more just than God?
Shall man be more pure than his Maker?
Behold he putteth no trust in his servants,
And to his angels he imputeth infirmity."[1]

And Eliphaz presently makes the applicat
to Job:

"Call now? Is there any one that will answer tl
And to which of the holy ones wilt thou look?

"The essential idea," as Barnes rema
"is, that even the holiness of angels was
to be compared with God." Perfect in tl
own measure, they are imperfect relatively
God, and Eliphaz defies Job to find one
them who, as conscious of this, will unc
take to advocate his sentiments. (Comp.
xv. 15.)

"Behold, in his holy ones he putteth no trust,
And the heavens are not pure in his eyes."

(See also xxv. 5.) Barnes in his comment
thus sums up the particulars obtained fr
this deeply-interesting book respecting

[1] Or *frailty*, as Noyes and Barnes render this
puted word תְּהִלָּה, which nowhere else occurs.

gels: "If the book of Job was composed in the time which I have supposed,[2] as stated in the previous parts of this Introduction, then these are among the earliest notices of the heavenly hierarchy that we have in the sacred volume. They imply that the existence of superior intelligences was an undisputed fact that might be used for the sake of argument and illustration; that they were eminently holy, though far inferior to God; that they performed important offices in the administration of the universe, and that they were under the control of the Almighty, and assembled together before Him from time to time to give their account, and to receive afresh his commands." He adds: "The Mohammedans probably derived their views on this subject from the Old Testament, intermingled with the fables of the Jews; but it is an interesting fact, that in the country of Mohammed, in the days of Job, the doctrine of the existence of a superior order of intelligences was held in its purity, and without any of the intermixtures of puerility with

[2] That is, not remote from the age of Abraham.

which the doctrine is intermingled in the Jewish traditions and in the Koran."[8]

The appellation of בְּנֵי אֵלִים, "sons of gods," is given to angels, Psalm xxix. 1:

> "Give to Jehovah, O ye sons of gods,
> Give to Jehovah glory and strength!"

And again, Psalm lxxxix. 6:

> "For who in the heavens shall (one) compare
> unto Jehovah?
> (Who) shall be like to Jehovah among the
> sons of gods?"

In ver. 5 and 7, they are called "holy ones." "Sons of gods" is by a common Hebrew pleonasm for "gods," *i.e.*, angels. That the appellation אֱלֹהִים, gods, is also given to them, is manifest from Ps. viii. 6 comp. with Heb. ii. 7, 9, and Ps. xcvii. 7 comp. with Heb. i. 6. In Ps. lxxxii. 1, the word seems to mean as in ver. 6, *judges*, comp. Ex. xxi. 6, xxii. 7, 8: and Ps. cxxxviii. 1, may be "before *God* will I sing," etc.; *i.e.*, before his sanctuary: see following verse.

Nebuchadnezzar exclaimed, concerning the mysterious stranger whom he beheld walk-

[8] See Sale, *Preliminary Dissertation*, sect. iv.

ing with the three Jews in the fiery furnace, "The form of the fourth is like a *son of gods*," בַּר־אֱלָהִין, (Dan. iii. 25,) by which, as appears by his subsequent words (ver. 28), he meant an angel.

As regards the "sons of God," mentioned Gen. vi. 2, this designation, opposed as it is moreover to the "daughters of men," lends no faint colouring of plausibility on philological grounds to the common idea entertained, both by the ancient Hebrew writers and the early Christian fathers, that angels are intended. The latter class indeed were probably mainly influenced by the Greek version. Rosenmüller *(Scholia)*, Gesenius *(Hebrew Lexicon)*, and other modern interpreters likewise understood angels to be meant. The familiar Grecian myth about the giants, the offspring of Cœlus and Terra, readily occurs to one here. Is it referable to some distorted tradition of what is recorded in this Scripture? In 2 Pet. ii. 4, we read of a class of fallen angels, who unlike Satan and *his* angels, who enjoy a present liberty, are chained in the gloom of Tartarus, awaiting their judgment; and the phraseology of

Jude 6, where the same are spoken of, is at least remarkable: "The angels which kept not their first estate, but left their own habitation," &c. Notwithstanding the conciseness of the narrative, which, as in many of those primitive records, stimulates rather than satisfies curiosity, there appears no reason why it should not be understood as describing an unlawful commerce between angelic and human beings. In this, as in not a few other cases, difficulties originate in our imagining we know more than is the case. But our divinity, as little as our philosophy, has yet dreamed of all the things in heaven and earth.[4]

To the information derived from the book of Job, we will now add the testimony of a

[4] The Chinese writers designate the "traditional period" of their country's history, the age of the five rulers. In this age, which consisted of ten generations, they say marriage was instituted, husbandry and medicine became known, the use of metals was discovered, and the harmony of sounds and music, also the properties of the silk-worm; and they add, that towards the close of this age, *divine and human personages mixed together, and produced confusion, and a great flood ensued.*—*China*, by W. G. Rhind.

few other Scriptures to the nature and character of angels.

Psalm ciii. 20, 21 makes mention of their might, and their subjection to the divine commands:

> "Bless ye Jehovah, (ye) his angels,
> Mighty of strength, that do his word,
> Hearkening to the voice of his word.
> Bless ye Jehovah, all (ye) his hosts;
> (Ye) his ministers that do his pleasure."

Psalm civ. 4, comp. Heb. i. 7 (on which, see the note of Bloomfield, *Greek Testament*,) seems to describe at once their docility, power, and rapidity of movement:

> "Who maketh his angels winds;
> His ministers a flaming fire."

That is, "*angels*, not less than the winds and lightnings, obey his fiat." "Who maketh his messengers swift as the wind: his ministers strong as a flaming fire." Chald.

That they have a language seems fairly deducible from various Scriptures; 1 Cor. xiii. 1: "With the tongues of men and of angels." Compare 2 Cor. xii. 4; Isa. vi. 3; Rev. v. 11, vii. 11, 12.

The controverted and difficult passage, Col.

ii. 18, seems to be a prohibition to worship them: "Let no one defraud you of your prize, being a voluntary in humility and worship of the angels." "This deprivation of their prize, and this wrong, they would suffer at the hands of those who would draw them away from Christ, the giver of the prize (2 Tim. iv. 8; Jas. i. 12; 1 Peter v. 4,) and lower them to the worship of intermediate spiritual beings."—*Alford;* who translates as follows: "Let no one of purpose defraud you of your prize in humility and worship of the angels." The apostle shows that our interest in the complete triumph of Christ, and its results (ver. 10-15), and our true standing, through participation in his death and resurrection, renders any recourse to angels, either as mediators or objects of worship, as sinful as it is needless.

The expression, "elect angels" (1 Tim. v. 21), evidently implies that the rest were not, in the mysterious counsels of the Deity, sustained as *they* were by his sovereign will and power in their original holiness.

Nor is mercy extended to the fallen angels: "For verily he doth not lay hold on

angels; but he layeth hold on the seed of Abraham." (Heb. ii. 16, Craik's amended translation.) That is to say, redemption belongs to Abraham's spiritual seed—true believers,—not to angels.

The marvels of this redemption are eagerly studied by angels: "Which things the angels desire to look into" (1 Pet. i. 12); which, moreover, implies that they are able to attain to but a partial acquaintance with them. (Comp. Eph. iii. 10.)

They respect in all cases the powers ordained by God, and do not, like self-willed and lawless men, rail against them: "Whereas angels, which are greater in power and might (*i.e.*, than the "dignities" just before mentioned, ver. 10), bring not railing accusation against them (the dignities) before the Lord." (2 Peter ii. 11.) The words παρὰ κυρίῳ (before the Lord) are omitted by some editors; but even without them the meaning would seem to be, that the angels in the reports they make of the evil of earthly potentates abstain from everything like contumely or reviling. Thus, also, in the mysterious transaction alluded to in Jude 9:

Michael the archangel durst not bring, even against the devil himself, a railing accusation, but said, "The Lord rebuke thee."[5]

Great as are their power and glory, they are not to be worshipped by men; being, after all, but the fellow-servants of the

[5] Of the nature of this contest, which the apostle's words appear to indicate took place in the presence of God, it would be vain to speak with any degree of confidence. Eadie *(Bibl. Cyclop.)* remarks: "What is said respecting his (Moses's) burial (Deut. xxxiv. 6), what Jude says of the archangel disputing with the devil about his body (Jude 9), and his appearance along with Elijah on the mount of transfiguration (Matt. xvii. 3), have led some to conjecture that he was immediately raised f. om the dead, and translated into heaven; but in the silence of Scripture, such conjectures are fruitless." If the body of Moses *was*, however, as is very probable, exempted from the ordinary lot of mortal bodies, and, by being reanimated, was, so to speak, wrested from the dominion of "him who hath the power of death," and who, in this singular instance, would then have been deprived of his usual temporary triumph in the legitimate results of the sin he was the means of first introducing, we can comprehend why he should oppose the divine purpose, and stand upon his rights (whether real or presumed). Man has voluntarily rendered himself obnoxious in various ways to the power of Satan, and it is no wonder, if, like Shylock, he will not give up without a struggle his "pound of flesh."

apostles and prophets, and of the faithful generally. (Rev. xxii. 9.)

Let us now proceed to notice some of the principal passages, as they occur in the different books of Scripture, relative to the appearances and ministry of angels. The first recorded instance of an angelic manifestation is in Gen. xvi., where, however, the angel of the Lord was evidently no other than Jehovah himself, the eternal Son; and this is a title by which Christ is often designated in the Old Testament; compare Ex. xxiii. 20, 21, xxxii. 34; Acts vii. 30-32, 38. Isaiah (lxiii. 9) also speaks of him as the "angel of his presence," and Malachi (iii. 1) as the "angel," or messenger, "of the covenant."

A poor Egyptian bond-woman was the first of our race (as far as we know) since the fall who was favoured by such an apparition of the divine and uncreated Angel. The memorial of the interview has been preserved amidst all the vicissitudes of nearly four thousand years, and the land and posterity of Ishmael still attest the truth and faithfulness of the words that proclaimed the lot and described the character of unborn millions, to

his fugitive and wandering mother. Hagar called the name of the Lord that spake unto her, "Thou (art) the God of vision;" *i.e.*, who permittest thyself to be seen; "for," she said, "do I also here see (*i.e.*, live) after the vision?" *i.e*, Do I yet live, having seen God? (Comp. chap. xxxii. 30.) "Wherefore the well was called Beer-lahai-roi, *well of life of vision;*" *i.e.*, where after the vision of God my life is nevertheless preserved, as Gesenius explains. It may be remarked by the way, that the lot of Ishmael was appointed, *v.* 12, עַל־פְּנֵי, *before* or *eastward of* (Ros. Ges.) all his brethren; and so in chap. xxv. 18, it is said, "Before (eastward of) all his brethren (his lot) fell."

One of the three men that came to Abraham as he sat in his tent door under the terebinth trees of Mamre (Gen. xviii.) was the Lord, though not at first, it seems, recognized as such by the patriarch, who thus not only "entertained angels unawares," but also One greater than they. The two others, who were angels, proceed on their way to Sodom, while Abraham intercedes for the city. They arrive there at even, and at first decline the proffered hospitality of Lot (perhaps as a

kind of reproof for the worldliness and inconsistency of his position in such a place). Manifest proof being soon afforded of the abominable depravity of the people, the first (recorded) example of infliction of punishment by angels takes place, and the wicked crowd are smitten with blindness. The angels announce the Lord's purpose respecting the city to Lot, whose warning words fail that solemn night to produce any effect on his sons-in-law, and who himself indeed, with his wife and daughters, is not without some constraint in the morning brought forth, and placed in safety by the heavenly visitors. In ver. 21, one of the angels, in answer to Lot's intreaty, says, "See, I have accepted thee concerning this thing also, that I will not overthrow this city, for the which thou hast spoken;" which is remarkable, both as evidence of the powers that had been delegated to him, so that he speaks as in the person of Jehovah himself; and as an instance of the way in which divine wisdom, providing for every circumstance, instructs these its ministers how to act in perfect accordance with its own counsels.

In all the visits of angels mentioned in Scripture, we notice an *economy* both in words and the display of power. The former are always few and direct to the purpose, and as to the latter, the cup is always full, but never runs over. There is nothing superfluous in either case. Like the flame of fire and the winds to which they are likened, they indulge in no capricious coruscations, nor prolong the blast unnecessarily. They *fulfil his word* (Ps. cxlviii. 8). The flash disappears when its end is answered; the wind ceases when its object is attained. Too humble to take pleasure in self-display, too obedient to overpass their commission even by a hair's breadth, too familiar with their own strength to be lavish in its expenditure; they manifest the excellence of their nature no less in the stillness of their repose than in the rapidity and precision of the service that preceded it. We remember the magnificent description given by the prophet (Ezek. i.) of the wondrous chariot that bore the glory of the Lord. When the living creatures went, and the high and dreadful wheels went by them, the noise of their wings was like the

noise of great waters: they moved like a *flash of lightning;* they were controlled by one *spirit;* they went every one *straight forward.* And when rest succeeded the irresistible might of their action, no tremor vibrated through the complex living machinery; nothing betokened that a great effort had been made; the pause is sudden, absolute, perfect; the wheels are motionless, the cherubim let down their wings, and amidst the solemn stillness that ensues, the voice of the Almighty alone is heard from the firmament of the terrible crystal over their heads.

In accordance with the above noticed economy in the exhibition of the supernatural, the two following instances of angelic interposition in behalf of Hagar and of Abraham (who had both been previously favoured with a sight of the Lord) were unaccompanied by any visible manifestation. The angel of God called to Hagar out of heaven, told her that God had heard the voice of her child; and then, as though it was God himself who spoke, continued, "Arise, lift up the lad, and join thy hand to him; for I will make him a great nation" (xxi. 17, 18).

And the angel of the Lord, who twice called from heaven to Abraham on Mount Moriah, so spoke, that for ought we know it might have been the Lord himself who addressed the patriarch (xxii. 11, 12, 15-18).

The father of the faithful was well acquainted with the fact that angels are "ministering spirits, sent forth to render service on account of them who are about to inherit salvation." (Heb. i. 14.) In sending his servant to procure a wife for his son from his kindred in Mesopotamia, he says, "The Lord God of heaven—he shall send his angel before thee" (xxiv. 7). And the servant, repeating afterwards his master's words, says, "He said unto me, The Lord, before whom I walk, will send his angel before thee, and prosper thy way" (ver. 40). He who had seen angels, and heard their voice from heaven, knew that also unseen and unheard they were wont to minister to the servants of God; and the sequel strikingly bore out the confidence he expressed. The way was indeed prospered, and each little circumstance that fell out witnessed to the presence of an unseen but minutely directing power. Not

only the pious servant himself recognized the divine hand, but even one whose eye quickly caught the nose-ring and bracelets that had been presented to his sister, and for whom gold at all times seems to have had no ordinary charms, united in the expression of the common feeling, that "the thing proceeded from the Lord."

On the ladder which Jacob in his dream beheld set up on the earth, and the top of which reached to heaven, the angels of God were seen by him ascending and descending, while the Lord stood above it (xxviii. 12, 13). This was typical of the character of a yet future happy age, when the heaven shall be open over the earth, and by means of the Son of Man angels shall continually pass from earth to heaven, and from heaven to earth, on errands of mercy to mankind (see John i. 51). The Son of Man will then, as he is presented to us in the eighth Psalm, be the connecting link between the glory that is above the heavens, and the blessing that rests on the lower creation: he will be manifested as the antitype of this mystic ladder.[6] But

[6] Typical foreshadowings, and as it were little pictures

neither was Jacob's vision without an immediate reference to himself Though struck with awe, he must have received a vivid impression of the number, power, and activity of the celestial beings, who, under the direction of the God of his fathers, would be employed for his protection during all his pilgrim days. Forced to leave his home through his own misconduct, the lonely wanderer to Padan-Aram must have appreciated the peculiar

of the millennial age sometimes occur, as on this occasion, in the Scripture history. In chap. xxvi. a concurrence of circumstances appears to constitute Isaac a type of his people in that day when they shall be in covenant with the Lord (vers. 3, 4), and also with the nations, who before persecuted them, represented by Abimelech (ver. 28). See Zech. viii. 23. The feast (ver. 30) and the well of water (ver. 32) are likewise significant features in the scene. On the part of the Gentiles, Esek (contention) and Sitnah (hatred) have long kept Israel from a settled place of blessing in their land. The "tribes of the wandering foot and weary breast" have been by unbelief deprived of their rest: but Rehoboth (ver. 22) will finally be obtained, and the *Lord* will *make room for them*, and they shall be *fruitful in the land*. (Comp. Isa. xxvii. 6, &c.) No more than a simple reference can be made here to some other scenes of a similarly typical character. (See Ex. xviii. 1-12; 1 Kings iv. 25; 2 Kings ii. 19-22; Matt. xvi. 28, xvii. 1-8.)

graciousness of this revelation, and realized its comfort, as he set up the pillar at Bethel, and vowed his vow to God.[7]

When Jacob, many years after this, was about to meet his brother, he was encouraged by the remarkable spectacle of a host or camp of angels; on which account he called the name of the place Mahanaim, *i.e.*, two hosts or camps; probably meaning his own and that of God.

This looks like a little trait of his natural character, for he was ever prone to depend upon contrivance and artifice, and had many lessons to learn before he ceased to mix up *self* with God's grace (how common an error!), and could trust himself in conscious helplessness on the divine power and goodness. The heavenly host, which in his early days he had beheld on the mystic ladder, were now encamped by him, seemingly in token that the protection they were about to afford him was to be of no merely passing or momentary character: for "the angel of the

[7] In this vow the apodosis properly begins in ver. 22, "And (if) the Lord will be my God: then this stone," &c. So Rosenmüller.

Lord encampeth round about them that fear him, and delivereth them." (Ps. xxxiv. 7.) But Jacob cannot refrain from bringing in *himself* again, and thus spoils his own comfort (for to think of God only as adding his resources to our own, is quite a different thing from *standing still* and seeing his *salvation*, Ex. xiv. 13), and presently the announcement of Esau's approach with four hundred men apparently quite effaces the remembrance of what he had seen, and sends him to his wonted habit of arranging and planning for himself. At the close of his days he declares that he had owed all his deliverance to God alone, to whom he refers in the words, "the angel which redeemed me from all evil." (xlviii. 15, 16; compare xxxi. 11, xxxii. 24-32, xxxv. 9-15.)

We next read of angelic ministry as employed in the infliction of the plagues on the Egyptians,—

> "He sent against them the fierceness of his anger,
> Wrath and indignation and trouble,
> By sending angels of evils." (Ps. lxxviii. 49.)

Angels, that is, that executed those judgments. In Ex. xii. 23, the angel that smote

the first-born is called "the destroyer." The angel of God (xiv. 19) which went before the camp of Israel appears to have been Jehovah himself, comp. ver. 24. So also in the following passages, iii. 2, xxiii. 20-23, xxxii. 34, xxxiii. 2.

So likewise probably the angel who withstood Balaam. (Numb. xxii.; compare Ex. iv. 24.)

Mount Sinai, we learn, was the scene of angels' ministry in the delivery of the law:

> "Jehovah from Sinai came,
> And rose from Seir unto them;
> He shined forth from Mount Paran,
> And came from myriads of holy ones."
> Deut. xxxii. 2.

So it is said in Ps. lxviii. 17,—

> "The chariots of God (are) twenty thousand;—
> thousands multiplied;
> The Lord (is) among them, (as on) Sinai, in the
> holy place."

To this reference is made, Acts vii. 53; Gal. iii. 19.

When the children of Israel failed to execute the Lord's command, that they should utterly root out the Canaanitish tribes from

the land, the angel of the Lord came up from Gilgal to Bochim, and rebuked them. (Jud. ii.) It does not seem an unfounded opinion entertained by some, that this was the same as the captain of the Lord's host that appeared to Joshua. (Josh. v. 13, 14.) Joshua's camp was long fixed at Gilgal. The Divine messenger comes up from thence as though he had tarried there in readiness to help the people in the remaining wars: but they had slackened their endeavours, and left the work incomplete; and now in place of leading their hosts, he leaves the place which was linked with many a past memorial of victory; and the people, instead of pouring their hosts for successive triumphs from Gilgal, are fain to sacrifice with unavailing tears at Bochim.

Of the angel of the Lord that pronounced the emphatic curse on the inhabitants of Meroz (Jud. v. 23), no particulars are afforded. It seems to have been the Lord himself who appeared to Gideon (vi. 12), and to Manoah and his wife (xiii. 3). He whose name, as he declared to Manoah, is "Wonderful." (Compare Isa. ix. 6.)

An angel directed the terrible pestilence

that for David's sin destroyed seventy thousand men. On this memorable occasion the destroyer was seen to stand "between the earth and the heaven, having a drawn sword in his hand stretched out over Jerusalem," which he was about to destroy, when the Lord repented him of the evil, and said, "It is enough; stay now thine hand!" And when David had sacrificed in the threshing-floor of Ornan the Jebusite, and the Lord had accepted the offering, then he also "commanded the angel: and he put up his sword again into the sheath thereof." (2 Sam. xxiv. and 1 Chron. xxi.) This is the only instance we read of wherein the destroying angel has been made visible to mortal eyes in the execution of his terrible office.

His passage was secret through the land of Egypt in that awful night, the stillness of which was suddenly broken by a great cry, the like to which was never heard before, nor will ever be again, that witnessed the accomplishment of the silent, though sure, work of destruction,—secret in that other night of vengeance, when the morning's light dawned on an hundred fourscore and five

thousand corpses of the Assyrians, in the camp of Sennacherib (2 Kings xix. 35),—secret, too, doubtless, on many other occasions of judgment, which men have attributed only to some secondary cause, little suspecting the spiritual agency which, sometimes with, and sometimes without the intervention of such a cause, is so largely intermingled with human affairs.

Thus does patriarchal and Jewish history abundantly testify, that these servants of God are employed not only in the greater concerns of kingdoms, as in the above instances, and others to be presently mentioned, but also in attending to the wants of individuals. Elijah's history furnishes another interesting example of the latter case. When even *his* adamantine spirit gave way (for he was a man of like passions with ourselves), and under the pressure of disappointed expectations, and the threats of Jezebel, he fled into the wilderness of Beersheba, and fell asleep under a juniper tree, an angel twice awoke him, and bade him eat of a cake, which was ready baken on the coals, and drink of a cruse of water that he found at his head,

because of the length of the journey that was before him. How different the character and circumstances of the outcast Hagar, and the mighty Tishbite! yet both were the objects of the same gracious and thoughtful Providence; and, probably, it may have been at or near the same spot where, a thousand years before, the eyes of the former were opened to see the well of water when her child was perishing with thirst, that the disheartened prophet thus found a table spread for him in the wilderness, and experienced the considerateness of him who thus ministered to his servant's necessities, though he could not sanction the infirmity which had, in this instance, brought him into the position to need it.

Once again after this the angel of the Lord appeared to Elijah, to communicate the divine commands. (2 Kings i. 3, 15.)

Were it permitted to us to discern them, how vast would appear the number of the spirits, both good and evil, that daily concern themselves with the things of the people of the earth! How various their powers and offices! how unceasing their activity! With

regard to the latter class, the single case of the man who was possessed by a legion (all of whom yet acted and spoke as with the unity of purpose of but *one*,) would suffice to prove their vast numbers; and it is not improbable that the former are even far more numerous. It is but a thin partition, so to speak, that divides the visible from the invisible world; and the not realizing the supernatural agency which, according to the abundant testimony of Scripture, is ever near us, both deprives us of much comfort, and a powerful motive for watchfulness. Between unreasonable scepticism and superstition, there is here also a scriptural medium. In these days, the former is, of the two, far more likely to prevail, at least among a large class.

In answer to the prayer of Elisha, the invading host of Syria was smitten at Dothan with temporary blindness. In this instance the veil that shrouded the spiritual actors was lifted up for a moment, and what was out of the range of mere mortal vision was given to his servant, at the instance of the prophet, to discern. "The Lord opened the

eyes of the young man, and he saw; and, behold, the mountain was full of horses and chariots of fire round about Elisha." (2 Kings vi. 17.)

Ps. xci. contains a remarkable testimony to the care of angels for the people of God; for although this psalm undoubtedly relates primarily and chiefly to the Son of Man, yet in principle it may be applied to those also that are his.

"Because thou, Jehovah, (art) my refuge;—
The Most High thou makest thy habitation,
(There) shall not befall thee evil,
And plague shall not come nigh thy tabernacle.
For his angels he will command for thee,
To keep thee in all thy ways.
On (their) hands they shall bear thee up,
Lest thou dash against the stone thy foot."[8]

Here angelic ministry is represented as not only warding off great evils, but even lesser

[8] The divisions of this beautiful psalm are as follows: i. ver. 1, the opening statement or thesis; ii. ver. 2, the words of Christ responsive to it; iii. ver. 3 to 8 inclusive, the psalmist speaks; iv. first part of ver. 9, Christ speaks; whose words are then, v., taken up as it were by the psalmist, who continues to the end of ver. 13; vi. 14-16, words of God. (See Rosenmüller, *Scholia*, and lxx., and Vulg.)

and trivial injuries; so that even the foot should not be hurt against a stone. The devil artfully referred to this Scripture when he tempted our Lord, on the strength of it, to cast himself down from a pinnacle of the temple. But Jesus refused to tempt God (*i.e.*, to put him to the proof); for he did not distrust, like Israel of old, his power and goodness, and therefore sought not such a demonstration of them as Satan suggested. *He* ever dwelt in the secret place, and under the shadow of his God; and the angels, whose aid he would not needlessly claim, when the devil was gone, "came and ministered unto him."

The wicked, on the other hand, as we have already seen, are exposed to punishment from angels. In Ps. xxxv., which also belongs to Messiah, (see ver. 19, and John xv. 25,) the psalmist prays that his enemies may be as chaff before the wind, chased by the angel of the Lord; that their way may be dark and slippery; and that the angel of the Lord may pursue them in it (vers. 5, 6).

The angel (Dan. iii. 25, 28) already referred to, may easily have been the Lord himself,

though the rendering of our common version, in ver. 25, expresses more than is necessarily implied in the original.

In his second dream (Dan. iv.) Nebuchadnezzar related that he saw "a watcher and an holy one," who "came down from heaven," to pronounce judgment on the great tree, the symbol, as the prophet explained, of the king himself (ver. 13). From verses 17, 26, we find that other "watchers" and "holy ones" were associated in this decree, which may have emanated from one of those heavenly councils above noticed. The passage affords fresh evidence of the angels being employed, under divine direction, to *watch* over the affairs of kingdoms.

An angel shut the lions' mouths, when Daniel was put into their den (vi. 22).

Gabriel and Michael are the only two angels whose names are known to us. The former, whose name signifies *the mighty one of God*, was sent to Daniel to explain the vision of the ram and the he-goat (Daniel viii.), and to communicate the prediction of seventy hebdomads. (Dan. ix.)

Under the new dispensation he announced

the birth of John the Baptist and of the Messiah.[9] His dignity is very great, for he stands in the presence of God. (Luke i. 19.) In the vision, chap. viii., two other "holy ones" converse in the hearing of the prophet, (ver. 13, 14,) and a man's voice (perhaps proceeding from the Lord) calls to Gabriel to make Daniel understand the vision. The second time Gabriel appeared to the prophet it was not in a vision: "While I was speaking in prayer, even the man Gabriel, whom I had seen in the vision at the beginning (*i.e.*, chap. viii.), being caused to fly swiftly,[1] touched (or came to) me, about the time of the evening oblation." (Chap. ix. 21.) God might have inspired Daniel to write the prophecy of the seventy hebdomads with-

[9] See Kitto's *Cyclopædia of Biblical Literature* (Gabriel).

[1] If we render with Gesenius and others, "wearied in flight," it must, probably, be taken as a figurative expression, conveying the same sense as our common version, lxx., *τάχει φερόμενος*. Rosenmüller observes, that no angels except the cherubim and seraphim are ever described as having wings, or as flying through the air. He renders this place, "*festinare factus cum festinatione*," *i.e.*, "*summa festinatione delatus*." (See, however, Rev. xiv. 6.)

out the intervention of an angel; but it was communicated in this manner as a reward for his faith and humiliation, and prayerful search into unfulfilled prophecy; and, no doubt, also to stimulate us to imitate him in these respects, and to seek skill and understanding in the visions of the future.

It is a difficult point to settle who was the august personage that appeared to Daniel on the banks of Hiddekel. (x.) A comparison with Rev. i. 13-16 has led many to the not improbable supposition that it was Christ himself. Yet the opinion of others, that it was the archangel Michael is not either without weight. That Michael, however, should have been thought by any to be identical with our Lord is singular. Jude 9 is entirely adverse to this idea; for of none but a *created* and subordinate being, however lofty his station, could it have been written, that he *durst not* bring against Satan a railing accusation.

In favour of the view that this stupendous vision was that of a created angel (in which case it was probably Michael, as

being the chief,) we may call to mind the features of grandeur that are found connected with the appearances of angels in other passages. (Com. Matt. xxviii. 3, 4, Rev. xviii. 1.) This glorious person kept his station on the waters of Hiddekel, during all the time that another, perhaps Gabriel,[a] was shewing the prophet the things which are contained in chaps. xi. and xii. He is mentioned at the conclusion (xii. 5-7), along with two others, who appeared at the last standing on either side of the river; one of whom enquired of him respecting the end of the wonders; to whom he makes answer, lifting up his hands to heaven, and swearing by him that liveth for ever. Daniel tells us, that he alone saw the vision; but its effect on his companions was very remarkable. A supernatural terror and trembling came upon them, similar to that which Eliphaz describes in his case as having immediately preceded the appearance of the spectre to him, and they fled to hide themselves. The impression upon the prophet himself was overpowering. As he expresses it, "His comeliness was

[a] This is also Theodoret's conjecture.

turned in him into corruption," he "retained no strength," his "sorrows were turned upon him," "breath was not left in him," and when he heard the angel's awful voice, he was fallen with his face to the earth in a deep sleep. The hand of another angel of human form then touched him, and set him upon his knees and the palms of his hands; but it was not until touched a second and a third time that his fear and trembling forsook him, and he gained composure enough to attend to the revelation.

Daniel's prayer, he was told, was heard from the first day that he had began to set his heart to understand, and to chasten himself before his God;[3] but the messenger sent by God was withstood for one and twenty days (the time the prophet was fasting, an encouragement to us to pray always, and not to faint) by an evil angel, who is called the

[3] Is this beautiful union of personal humiliation with earnest research sufficiently attended to by students of the Word? Might we not expect more unity of judgment in the important department of unfulfilled prophecy, were it always approached with the chastened feelings of Daniel on the banks of Hiddekel? See also ch. ix. 3.

prince of the kingdom of Persia,[4] doubtless appointed by Satan to resist the purposes of God in that country; and to hinder on the present occasion the revelation of them to his servant. So powerful was his resistance that it was necessary for "Michael, one of the chief princes," to come to his help; "and (so) I remained there," said the angel accounting for his delay, "with the kings of Persia." By the kings of Persia may be meant the kingdom of Persia, which may be tantamount to the "prince of the kingdom of Persia" just before mentioned, as Rosenmüller explains.[5] To the secret workings of this satanic agent may be attributed, with great probability, the troubles and hindrances which befel the Jews in building the temple, as narrated in the fourth of Ezra, and which caused the suspension of the work all the remaining days of Cyrus, until the reign of Darius. The angel announces to Daniel his

[4] The reading of the Septuagint, Deut. xxxii. 8, is well known. Though uninspired, it is yet evidence of the ancient and true belief among the Jews of angelic superintendency of the nations of the earth.

[5] Septuagint, Vul. Syr. and Theodot. all express the *singular*,—king or ruler.

intention of presently returning to fight with the "prince of Persia," adding, "and when I am gone forth, lo! the prince of Grecia shall come;" which we may perhaps paraphrase thus: When I shall have finished this expedition, and carried out the remaining counsels of God relative to the kingdom of Persia till the period of its end, a new adverse power will come upon the scene; another evil angel, the "prince of Grecia," shall be in the ascendency, and endeavour to counteract the divine purposes in the kingdom that is to succeed the Persian, and rule in its stead over thy people. Moreover he informs the prophet that "there is none that strengtheneth himself with (*i.e.*, assisteth) me in these things, (or it may be *against these*,—the princes of Persia and Grecia scil.) but Michael your prince. "And as to me, in the first year of Darius the Mede, I stood to strengthen and for a munition to him." Whether the antecedent to "him" be Michael or Darius is rather doubtful. But the former is probably meant, and the mention of Darius is only to mark the time. The combined powers of these two mighty angels were

most likely employed in the fall of the Babylonian empire, and the establishment of the Medo-Persian that succeeded it; even as afterwards it may have been to the co-operation of similar superhuman strength that Alexander was, unconsciously, indebted for his astonishing success, and meteor-like career of conquest.[6]

Michael signifies, *who (is) as God?* An admirable name for the chief of the angels: for vast is the disparity between even him and his Creator; and no one knows this better than the archangel himself. How different from him whose condemnation was *pride*, and who tempted Eve likewise with the expectation of being כֵּאלֹהִים *as God*, in knowledge of good and evil.

To this angel is especially allotted the

[6] Plutarch, comparing Cæsar with Alexander, observes, that in the former we see the great man, but still it is man; there is nothing in his actions above the reach of human power. Whereas in those of Alexander, one can distinguish as it were some rays of divinity. His attempts were fitter for a god than a mortal, and yet he executes them. Like Achilles, he proves the truth of Homer's definition of valour; he says it is a divine inspiration, and that some god gets possession of the man for the time, and acts within him.

care of the Jewish people. (v. 21.) Fearful and terrible are the scenes described in yet unaccomplished prophecies through which this people have to pass; deep the delusion to which they will be given up, ere the veil that is still upon their heart be removed. Their present prospects indeed are flattering. The occupation of their land, and the rebuilding of their temple, are events very likely to occur shortly. In the pride and stoutness of heart that characterised their fathers, many may say, "The bricks are fallen down, but we will build with hewn stones: the sycamores are cut down, but we will change them into cedars." (Isa. ix. 9, 10.) But "his anger is not turned away, but his hand is stretched out still." And at the end a time of trouble awaits them, "such as never was since there was a nation even to that same time." Michael, their great prince, will then stand up on their behalf, and a remnant of them will obtain deliverance. (xii. 1.)

Fourteen years after the latest of the revelations to Daniel, a series of remarkable visions was communicated to Zechariah. In

the first, he saw by night a man[7] riding upon a red horse, behind whom were red horses, speckled (or *bay*) and white. On these also were riders, as appears from ver. 11. The scene was a valley or low place grown with myrtles; emblematical, it may be, of the actual depressed condition of Israel, and the hope of better things springing up. These horsemen were angels sent by the Lord to walk to and fro through the earth (ver. 10.) They report to their leader that they had done so, and that all the earth was in profound tranquillity (with the exception, of course, of the land of Israel). The angel then asks the Lord about the period of mercy for Jerusalem, after the past seventy years of indignation; and he receives in answer words of comfort, which he communicates to the prophet. The destinies of Israel are here again shewn to be the object of lively interest to the angels of God.

In the vision wherein the prophet was shewn Joshua the high priest standing before the angel of the Lord, and Satan stand-

7 Whom Jerome informs us, the Jews imagined was Michael.

ing at his right hand to resist him, it would appear from the words, "*The Lord* said unto Satan, the Lord rebuke thee, O Satan," &c., that the "angel of the Lord" was Christ himself; for the explanation of those who think that a created angel is here called Jehovah, because he performs the part of Jehovah, is not quite satisfactory. This transaction is sometimes, but quite wrongly, supposed to be referred to in Jude 9, a passage already noticed. There is only a certain parallelism of circumstances, but not identity. One of the promises to Joshua, if he should prove faithful, is (ver. 7), "I will give thee places to walk[7] among those that stand by;" that is, the angels who were in attendance (ver. 4). Joshua is promised that he should have angels for his companions and protectors.[8] Upon the interpretation of this symbolic scene it is unnecessary here to enter, but it may be noticed how strikingly it calls to our

[7] Gesenius and Fürst make מַהֲלְכִים, to be part. hiph. of הָלַךְ; in which case it would have the sense assigned to it by the former of *leaders* or *companions*. The sense of the passage, however, remains the same.

[8] The Chaldee interprets this promise with reference to the future life, but this is probably wrong.

remembrance the divine grace in the salvation of a sinner. Satan's charges are set aside by the sovereign mercy of Him who *chooses*, and who in the exercise of his prerogative plucks the consuming brand out of the fire. The filthy garments of nature are taken away, and the man is robed in beautiful raiment. Moreover the official dignity of a priest is obtained, together with pardon and recovered purity. (Comp. Rev. i. 6.) A "fair mitre" is set upon his head. Lastly, the angels who rejoiced over his repentance (Luke xv. 10) become his fellow-servants and guardians in his after walk.

Zechariah's last vision (chap. vi.) appears to present an epitome of the course of the four great Gentile empires. He saw four chariots drawn by different coloured horses issue forth from between two mountains of brass; emblems perhaps of the firm and unchangeable decrees of the Almighty, by which, as by brazen barriers, all agency, whether human or spiritual, is restrained, until the appointed time is come. The chariots are explained to be "the four spirits of the heavens, which go forth from standing

before the Lord of all the earth." Four angels, we may infer, who preside over the nations of the world. Probably they are the same who, in Rev. vii. 1, were seen by John "holding the four winds of the earth;" restraining, that is, the outbreak of wars, commotions, and tribulations, till a certain number out of the twelve tribes of Israel were sealed in their foreheads, that they might be preserved through the approaching judgments. In Daniel's first vision (chap. vii.) "the four winds of the heavens strove upon the great sea. And four great beasts came up from the sea, diverse one from another." Here is denoted the consecutive rise of the four kingdoms, that were each in various degrees connected with the Mediterranean.[9] Its agitated and tempestuous waters are pictured as their birthplace. This is the symbolic expression of the fact, that amidst wars and revolutions in the regions of the earth bordering on the great sea, these kingdoms were successively developed. The

[9] For details respecting this, may be consulted *Remarks on the Prophetic Visions in the Book of Daniel*, by Dr. S. P. Tregelles, p. 37.

first burst of the storm over the sea, in Daniel's vision, is the result of the opening of the brazen barrier in that of Zechariah. The rise of the first beast in the former corresponds with the coming forth of the first chariot in the latter. This first chariot is simply mentioned, and nothing more is said of it, it having already at the time of the vision run its course. The black horses (the spiritual power that controlled the affairs of the Medo-Persian empire) had quieted the Lord's spirit in the north country (ver. 8), *i.e.*, by the execution of the divine judgment on Babylon. The white followed in due time, and the same region was the scene of Grecian conquest. The spotted red[1] went towards the south; and Egypt became part of the Roman empire. But notwithstanding the strength of this power, its never-satisfied ambition, and its insatiable thirst for territory; its boundaries, we may presume, would not have been so widely extended as they were, unless the spiritual power that had

[1] Ges. makes אַמֻּץ, to mean *active* or *nimble*, with which agree Aquila and Vul. The above is according to Rosen. and Fürst, *i.e.*, red sprinkled with white spots.

this sphere allotted to it, had received a divine commission so to order; and thus we read, "And the red went forth, and sought to go, that they might walk to and fro through the earth; and he said, Get ye hence, walk to and fro through the earth."

As in the vision, Dan. vii., the heavenly kingdom of the Son of Man succeeds the four earthly ones, so after this vision of the four chariots, and appropriately closing the whole series, crowns of silver and gold are placed on the head of Joshua the high priest, who becomes thus a type of the Man whose name is the Branch, who will branch up from his place; who will wear at once the priestly mitre and the royal crown; and thus as the great Melchizedec, uniting in himself the two long separated offices, will exhibit their harmonious blending, and introduce the blessing which will attend the exercise of their functions by *one heavenly and perfect will.* "The counsel of peace shall be between them both."

As the cherubim have been supposed by some to be angels, the following extract from a beautiful work published by Messrs.

Bagster and Sons, *The Tabernacle of Israel, its holy Furniture and Vessels*, with coloured illuminations, &c., will not be out of place here:—

"The cherubim seem, throughout Scripture, to be symbolic figures, shadowing forth the glorious power of God, whereby he accomplishes his purposes by agencies often unseen, and yet sure, and efficient, and overruling. This power of Jehovah is first described minutely under these symbols in the book of Ezekiel; where the cherubim are represented as four living creatures, having every one four faces; the face of a man, of a lion, of an ox, and of an eagle."

After explaining the meaning of these symbols, the author thus refers to the cherubim on the mercy-seat:—

"These, then, are some of the attributes of the cherubim, the executors of God's will; and here we find them beaten out of one piece with the mercy-seat. Some have thought these figures betokened angels, and that their bending posture towards the mercy-seat is explained by that text, 'which things the angels desire to look into.' (1 Peter i. 12.)

And in many pictorial representations of the mercy-seat, we see them represented in a kneeling posture, as if in adoration. Others have thought that the cherubim here symbolize the church. But the construction itself, as well as uses of the mercy-seat, seem to preclude either of these interpretations of the type. The cherubim are distinctly stated to be 'OF the mercy-seat,' and 'OUT OF the mercy-seat.' (Ex. xxv. 19, xxxvii. 8.) And this is still more apparent in the Hebrew, where the preposition used in the eighteenth and nineteenth verses of chap. xxv., and the seventh and eighth verses of chap. xxxvii., and translated '*on* the mercy-seat,' and '*on* the two ends,' &c., should properly be translated 'from;' also, as to the word translated in Exod. xxv. 18, 'beaten work,' and Exod. xxxvii. 7, 'beaten out of one piece,' the meaning seems to be, that the cherubim were not cast or moulded separately from the mercy-seat, and then attached to it, but were beaten out of the solid mass of gold which formed the mercy-seat; the one being beaten from out of the one end, and the other from the other. Angels cannot, then, be

typified here by the cherubim; for if they were, it would imply that they form part of the seat of God's mercy, and would thus stand very much in the place in which Popery has set them, as the agents for procuring or exhibiting the mercy of God, derogating thereby from the person and work of the Lord Jesus himself, who is the only way of approach to God, and the one through whom alone God can shew his grace and mercy to us; for 'there is no other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved.' (Acts iv. 12.) The same argument would equally apply, if the church were symbolized by the cherubim on the mercy-seat. The church would thus become, what indeed false systems have made it, the platform from whence God dispenses his grace, instead of the body which has received his grace. The mercy-seat and cherubim, being all of one piece, represents, it is believed, Christ as the one who holds all the glorious power of God, associated with mercy, and in and through whom God is able to display his power and righteousness, ever inseparably linked on with mercy and grace."

After some remarks on the contrast of the position of the cherubim at the east of the garden of Eden, and their place and attitude on the mercy-seat, he observes,—

"'All power in heaven and earth' hath been given to Christ, but he now employs it but for one object, to preserve the place of mercy and of grace for his saints; and the place where we now know the full propitiation for our sins, is the place where we behold the majesty, power, and glory of God, all now in our favour, because forming part of the mercy-seat itself. All the intelligence and sympathy expressed in the face of the man; all the majesty, terribleness and power of the lion; all the patient enduring strength of the ox; all the rapidity and clear sightedness of the eagle, now stand engaged on the side of mercy. Redemption in Christ has converted the very attributes of God, which were once the most fearful and opposed to us as sinners, to be the very shelter for us, and the power, and assurance, and strength of our blessing."

From Rev. iv., it would appear that certain features and characteristics of cherubic

power will be possessed (in measure) by the redeemed in glory.

Concerning the seraphim, Dr. Eadie (*Bibl. Cyclop.*) favours the opinion "that they were, or were symbols of, the most exalted order of the angelic host."

In Eccl. v. 6, "the angel" is the priest, so called as the *messenger* (comp. Mal. ii. 7) of the Lord.

"Angels' food" (Ps. lxxviii. 25) is better given in the marginal reading, "bread of the mighty," that is, princely or choice food. Compare Judges v. 26, "a dish or bowl of princes" (com. vers. "a lordly dish") אַדִּירִים, is never used for angels.

The opening of the New Testament dispensation must have excited the deepest interest in the heavenly host.

Gabriel was then sent to disclose much more to Zechariah and to Mary than he had been commissioned above five hundred years before to reveal to Daniel. His first appearance by the side of the altar of incense was in keeping with those marvellous counsels of grace, for the accomplishment of which the time was now come, and which the un-

belief of the aged priest could not retard, though it caused that he was the last instead of the first to praise God for his mercy.

To Joseph the angel of the Lord appeared each of the three times, not openly but in a dream; "because the man was very faithful, and did not need this sight," says Chrysostom; but it is impossible always to give a special reason for such things. When the Saviour was born, the interesting announcement was made to the shepherds near Bethlehem, who suddenly found themselves by night in the presence of the angel of the Lord, and surrounded by the light of the divine glory. A multitude of the heavenly host suddenly appeared with the angel at the conclusion of his message; and then probably the same voices that had four thousand years before celebrated the creation of the world, joined in praising him whose blessed and eternal Son, by whom that world was made, was then lying in the helplessness of infancy—a little babe in a manger at Bethlehem! Another universal chorus of praise will there be in heaven as soon as the period arrives for the fall of Babylon, and the mar-

riage of the Lamb. (Rev. xix.) Meanwhile the accession of each individual sinner to the number of the saved awakens joy in the presence of the angels of God (Luke xv. 7, 10), for their sympathies are with that which, however overlooked or despised by the world, not less advances God's glory than it brings felicity to man.

Probably antecedently to his incarnation, the Son of God had not, strictly speaking, been "seen of angels." (1 Timothy iii. 16.) Though doubtless the object of their adoration as one of the Holy Trinity, they did not ordinarily behold him with their eyes until the manifestation of the "mystery of godliness." His occasional appearance of old in human form, scarcely qualifies the broad and general statement. The redemption-work of our Lord must have vastly added to the knowledge before possessed by the angels, both of the Godhead generally, and of the Person of the Son in particular.

The two recorded instances of angels ministering to Jesus are, (1) After the temptation (Matt. iv. 11); and (2) In his agony in Gethsemane. (Luke xxii. 43.)

The only other mention of angelic ministration in the Gospel, before we come to the resurrection, is in the instance of the pool of Bethesda. (John v. 4.) If we admit with Dr. Davidson[2] and others the genuineness of this passage on external grounds, it is very clear, as the learned Doctor observes, that its "internal evidence is certainly not against its authenticity." Only it must be observed that the periodical descent of the angel is not mentioned as a mere Jewish belief, but a positive fact, independent of any subjective views on such miraculous agency. As to when the angel first commenced, and when he ceased to trouble the waters, and impart to them healing virtue, we are left in ignorance; but the following observations by another[3] are deserving of attention. "In the Introduction to the first *part* of this gospel, I have shewn that there was, through all the stages of the history of Israel, the occasional putting forth of a special energy of the Spirit, by which, and not by the resources

[2] *Lectures on Biblical Criticism*, pp. 192-194.

[3] *Notes on the Gospel of John.* W. Yapp, 70, Welbeck Street.

of their own system, the Lord was sustaining Israel, and teaching them to know where their final hope lay. From the call of Abraham to the throne of David, we saw this. Now I judge that *Bethesda* was a witness of the same thing. Bethesda was not that which the system itself provided. It was opened in Jerusalem, as a fountain of healing, by the sovereign grace of Jehovah (as indeed its name imports). Neither was it an abiding, but only an occasional relief, as the judges and prophets had been. Like them, it was a testimony to the grace and power that were in God himself for Israel; and had, perhaps, yielded this its testimony at certain seasons all through the dark age which had passed since the days of the last of their prophets. But it must now be set aside. Its waters are to be no more troubled. He to whom all these witnesses of grace pointed had now appeared. As the true fountain of health, the Son of God had now come to the daughter of Zion, and was shewing himself in Jerusalem."

There are two passages in the Gospels relative to the subject of this paper of peculiar

interest, Matt. xviii. 10, and Luke xvi. 22. Of the former, "Take heed that ye despise not one of these little ones; for I say unto you, that in heaven their angels do always behold the face of my Father which is in heaven." Dr. Kitto[4] well remarks, "That angels minister to the people of God there can be no doubt, but that every one, or every one of the righteous, has his guardian angel, is another question, concerning which it is difficult to arrive at a conclusion from the passage before us." He adds: "It occurs to us that an argument in favour of it may be derived from the fact that our Lord's auditors must, with the opinions they held, have understood him in this sense." However it must be remembered, that the first and most natural impression received by his hearers was not always the true one. At times there was even a designed ambiguity and a covert sense in his words; see *e.g.* Matt. xvi. 5-7; John ii. 19-22. And indeed it seems more probable that (as in the cases of Jacob and Elisha) many angels rather than one, and that one always the same, are often employed

[4] *Pictorial Bible.*

in ministering to each of the Lord's "little ones," that is, true believers (ver. 6). These angels are also of the more exalted orders, and of great power, as is signified in the above passage.

And what is more likely than that their kindly offices should be experienced by us at the solemn period of dissolution? We may very safely rest our proof of this on Luke xvi. 22: "And it came to pass that the beggar died, and was carried by the angels into Abraham's bosom:" and here it may be remarked, with reference to what was said above, we read of 'angels,' not an angel. The thought of these invisible spirits surrounding the believer in his dying moments, in readiness to convey his spirit to the appointed place of rest and happiness, cannot but, in its place, contribute to the comfort and joy, both of the departing and of his pious relations or friends who may be watching around him. Before the last mournful offices are performed, even before the closing of the eyes, the spirit that has fled has begun to experience in a new, and to us mysterious sphere, the ministry of angels; welcome and

grateful, it may easily be conceived, on the first entrance into an invisible and untried world.

Concerning Acts xii. 15, Dr. Kitto observes, "As explained by the notions of the Jews, this would not mean Peter's ghost, or intimate that they supposed him dead; nor, necessarily, that it was his guardian angel (for they supposed every person had one); but that it was an angel in his shape. They believed that commissioned angels did sometimes assume the appearance of particular men, especially when they had something to impart which might most suitably come from the persons whose aspects they assumed." It need scarcely be remarked in addition, that this passage teaches nothing certain; the supposed appearance of Peter's angel, being founded on a human notion, which, even supposing it were correct, has no support from revelation.

After our Lord's resurrection, an angel descended from heaven, and rolled back the great stone that had closed the entrance of the sepulchre (Matt. xxviii. 2), in order to admit those who were to be the witnesses of

the stupendous event that had taken place. He was of glorious appearance (ver. 3), and at the sight of him the keepers became as dead. Seated, as though in derision of the careful precautions of the chief priests and Pharisees, on the stone which they had sealed, he may be said to have delivered the first discourse on the resurrection,—a discourse remarkable, if any other, for compendious brevity and comprehensive fulness (5-7).

Probably it was this angel who subsequently, accompanied by another, was seen inside the tomb. (Luke xxiv. 4; John xx. 12.) Dr. Davidson remarks:

"It need occasion no perplexity to observe, that Matthew and Mark mention but *one* angel; Luke and John *two*. The angel mentioned by the first two evangelists was the angel that terrified the Roman guard, rolled away the stone from the door of the tomb, sat on it, and addressed Mary, the mother of James and Salome. The two angels mentioned by Luke and John were seen by Mary Magdalene on her return to the sepulchre; and after that by Joanna and the other women with her. The two angels were seen in

the τάφος, or tomb, where the body had lain; the one angel was seen in the μνημεῖον, or sepulchre, at the door of the τάφος. Probably the latter angel had removed from the outside to the interior of the tomb between the visit of Mary and Salome and the second visit of Mary Magdalene."—*Sacred Hermeneutics*, p. 569.

The remaining passages in the Gospels relative to angels are prophetic, and describe their employment at the end of the age. In Matthew xiii. 39-42 we learn that, as the reapers in the harvest, they will gather out of the kingdom all the wicked and the false professors (represented by the tares), and cast them into a furnace of fire; and again (ver. 49), that they will "sever the wicked from among the just." An awful sight, truly, for the latter to witness! but as the resurrection of the dead, and the transformation of the living saints, will have probably taken place before this, it will be one which they will be able to behold unmoved by those natural and merely human sympathies that, if still possessed, might render it intolerable.

In Matt. xvi. 27, our Lord prophesies of

his coming in glory with his angels, and shortly after he presented on the mount of transfiguration a miniature and typical representation of his kingdom (*v.* 28, c. xvii).

One office assigned to the angels is the gathering together of the elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other. (Matthew xxiv. 31; Mark xiii. 27.) This appears to mean that, after the resurrection, angels will gather them together to some one place on the earth, just before their being caught up in the clouds.[5] Of this solemn day the angels themselves know as little as men (ver. 36).

To this epoch the parable of the sheep and the goats (xxv. 31, etc.) relates. From the circumstance of the "holy angels" being alone mentioned as being with the Lord at this time, and not any of his saints, it may be inferred that the "throne of his glory" is *in the air;* for when he comes to the earth it will be in company with all his redeemed,

[5] So Chrysostom explains, comparing 1 Thess. iv. 16, *Ὥστε ἀναστάντας μὲν συλλέξουσιν ἄγγελοι, συλλεγέντας δὲ ἁρπάσουσιν αἱ νεφέλαι.* Hom. lxxvi. in Matt. So also Theophylact, following as usual his master.

who will have been previously caught up to meet him, and who will be associated with him in the execution of the judgment. (1 Thess. iv. 16, 17; Zech. xiv. 5; Jude 14, 15; Rev. xix. 7-9, 11, 14, xiv. 15, 18.) In the progress of the Lord's descent to the earth, therefore, when the last trumpet has sounded, will the separation of the tares from the wheat, and the sheep from the goats, be made by the instrumentality of angels. All the Gentiles (*πάντα τὰ ἔθνη*—in contradistinction to Israel, the heathen, apostates, and all who stand in no professed relation to Christ as king and shepherd, whose judgment will be different both as to time and circumstances), that is to say, all *individuals* among them who *profess Christianity*, and who, whether really, or only ostensibly, belong to the fold of the great Shepherd-King, the antitype of Moses and David (Ex. iii. 1; Deut. xxxiii. 5; Ps. lxxviii. 70-72) will be separated into two classes, and receive their respective awards.

In various signal instances recorded in the Acts of the Apostles, we find the interposition of angels to deliver the apostles, and to advance the progress of the truth. In chap.

v. 19, etc., we read how the apostles were rescued from prison by the angel of the Lord, who opened and afterwards closed again the doors, unperceived by the keepers who were standing before them. In viii. 26, how an angel instructed Philip to go on the way toward Gaza which was desert, but without telling him beforehand of the interesting enquirer, for whose alone sake the evangelist was withdrawn from the populous and encouraging field of his labours.

Chap. x. 3, tells how an angel in "bright clothing" (ver. 30) appeared in a vision to Cornelius as he was fasting and praying, and told him that his prayers and his alms were come up for a memorial before God, and that he should send men to Joppa for Simon, surnamed Peter, who should tell him words whereby he and all his house should be saved (xi. 14); xii. 7, how the angel of the Lord came upon Peter as he was sleeping in prison between two soldiers, bound with two chains, while the keepers before the door kept watch; whereupon a light shined in the prison, and Peter having been awakened by the angel, his chains fell from off his

hands, and having girded himself and bound on his sandals, and cast his garment about him, as bidden by the angel, he followed the latter through the first and second wards to the iron gate that led to the city, which opened to them of its own accord; and having passed through one street, the angel departed from Peter, who was not yet come to himself, but thought it was a vision he saw.

The same chapter tells us of the awful judgment executed on Herod, the measure of whose iniquity—though he had slain James the brother of John, and but for the above wonderful interposition would have doubtless killed Peter also—was not filled up till, on a certain occasion, he permitted the impious flattery of the people, who paid him divine honours, to pass unrebuked; for which sin immediately the angel of the Lord smote him, and he died a lingering death of terrible torture, being eaten of worms.

Acts xxiii. 8, alludes to the disbelief of the Sadducees, not only in the resurrection, but in angels and spirits; "but the Pharisees," says the inspired narrator, "confess both;" that is, as Dr. Bloomfield observes,

"the *resurrection*, and the existence of *immaterial beings*; πνεῦμα and ἄγγελος being considered as falling under the same head.[6] Lastly, when Paul was in danger of shipwreck, the angel of God stood by him in the night, and bade him not to fear, telling him he was to be brought before Cæsar, and moreover, that for his sake all that sailed with him would be preserved; all which was fulfilled. (Acts xxvii. 23, 24.)

[6] Dr. Bloomfield's Greek text is certainly the least commendable part of his generally useful edition of the Testament. See remarks on this subject in Dr. Tregelles's introduction to his *Book of Revelation, translated from the ancient Greek text*, Bagster, pp. 19-22. It is very unsatisfactory to the scholar who reveres (as well he may) the weighty authority of the most ancient MSS. constantly to find them so summarily and slightingly put aside by the learned editor. Such an one will probably not acquiesce in his note to verse 9 of this chapter, where the external authority for cancelling the words μὴ θεομαχῶμεν is pronounced "very slender." Neither does it seem necessary to suppose an *aposiopesis*. "But if a spirit hath spoken to him, or an angel,"—at the mention of which the clamour seems to have been redoubled on the part of the Sadducees, and to have drowned the remainder of the sentence. [Since this paper was written, valuable aid to the critical study of the Greek Testament has been afforded in the volumes of Dean Alford and Mr. Ellicott.]

Some texts now have to be considered in the epistles.

"We are made," says Paul, speaking of himself and his fellow apostles, "a spectacle unto the world, both to angels and to men." (1 Cor. iv. 9.) That is, "we are become a gazing-stock to the whole universe."

Some of the church in Corinth were in the habit of going to law with each other before unbelievers. In reproving this practice, the apostle reminds them that the saints were destined to judge the world; much more, therefore, were they worthy to judge the smallest matters. Moreover that they would judge angels; how much more things that pertain to this life? (1 Cor. vi. 1-3.) *Fallen* angels are most probably meant (see 2 Pet. ii. 4; Jude 6) in the future judgment of whom the saints (it seems to be signified) will be assessors with Christ.[7] (Comp. Rev. xx. 4.) If this be so, it will not be the least wonderful of the circumstances of "the great day," that angels, once bright and holy, but now degraded and polluted, will see human beings, themselves once vile and perishing,

[7] See Bloomfield ad loc.

enthroned as their judges; that they who owe everything to sovereign grace shall be admitted to a share in such an arbitration; that they shall concur in the sentence which will be pronounced on those higher beings, for whom no Saviour died, and to whom no mercy was offered!

"For this cause ought the woman to have power on her head because of the angels." (1 Cor. xi. 10.) She must have, that is, on her head, a veil or covering, an emblem of her being under power, "because of the angels," who, being present in the meetings of Christians, and spectators of their worship, would be offended by anything unseemly; and because, as Alford (*Gr. Test.*) remarks, "They delight in the due order and subordination of the ranks of God's servants, and by a violation of that order we should be giving offence to them." (See also 1 Tim. v. 21.) This incidental allusion to the presence of angels in divine worship is of great interest. It is singular that some should have found these words difficult. Is it not truly *nodum in scirpo quærere?*

Alluding to the subtlety of Satan, and

the specious guise under which he is often accustomed to work, the apostle uses the expression, "angel of light" (2 Cor. xi. 14), indicative of the purity and holiness of those spirits, whose form the evil one can assume when it answers his purpose. This is a passage well deserving of serious consideration in these times.

Various orders of the celestial powers are alluded to in the words, "principality, power, might, dominion,"—abstract for concrete. (Eph. i. 21.) "Principalities and powers" are again mentioned (iii. 10); see also Col. ii. 10; and the words are also used with reference to evil angels. (Eph. vi. 2; Col. ii. 15.)

In Col. i. 16, the different orders are spoken of as "thrones, dominions, principalities, powers;" in 1 Pet. iii. 22, as "angels, powers, authorities (δυνάμεις)," the singular of which is rendered "might" in the authorized version. (Ephesians i. 21.) Perhaps no great stress is intended to be laid on the exact order of these designations; nevertheless, if we arrange the lists in the following way, a tolerably uniform scale can be made out.

Eph. i. 21.	iii. 10.	Col. ii. 10.	i. 16.	1 Pet iii. 22.
			Thrones Dominions	
Principality	Principalities.	Principality	Principalities.	Angels
Power	Powers.	Power	Powers	Powers
Might				Authorities
Dominion				

"Thrones" seems to denote the highest order, though it may be not so much elevated above "principalities" as to prevent the latter being a sufficiently accurate designation of the higher orders in general (included in the "angels" in 1 Pet. iii. 22), in contradistinction to "powers," perhaps the general term for the lower orders. Below these come the "authorities," and last of all the "dominions." In Col. i. 16, the two extreme orders are first mentioned, and then the common and general designations; the apostle seeming to contrast in this verse the things enumerated *in pairs;* "heaven and earth," "visible and invisible," "thrones or dominions," "principalities or powers."

At the head of all the heavenly principalities is Michael, "one of the chief princes" (Daniel x. 13); "the great prince" (xii. 1);

"the archangel" (Jude 9; 1 Thessalonians iv. 16). There appears to be no scriptural authority for the idea of there being *seven* archangels. We only find mention of *one*. Rev. viii. 2, speaks of "the seven angels who stand in the presence of God;" but we know not that Michael is one of them: nor supposing he is, would it follow that the rest are archangels also. One of the number might be superior to the rest, or at least *primus inter pares*, like Peter, for example, among the other apostles.

We may call to mind here, with adoring gratitude, the marvellous result of God's electing and redeeming love in the future elevation of the church of Christ above all the heavenly host. As one in the Father and the Son (John xvii. 21-23); as the bride the Lamb's wife (Rev. xix. 7; Eph. v. 30, 32); as the living creatures, and throned elders round about the throne of the Lord God Almighty (Rev. iv.); as kings and priests of God and of Christ (xx. 4, i. 6); as members of the mystic body of Christ, and risen with him (Eph. i. 23, ii. 6, iv. 15, 16; Col. i. 18; ii. 19, iii. 1; 1 Cor. xii. 12, &c.); as heirs of

God, and joint-heirs with Christ (Rom. viii. 17); what can rival the privilege, dignity, and blessing of our standing? And we may be certain that the principalities and powers who learn *by the church* "the manifold wisdom of God" (Eph. iii. 10), feel no jealousy in seeing redeemed sinners preferred before themselves, and promoted, according to God's eternal purpose, to distinctions to which *they* are necessarily strangers.

To recur to the archangel. His voice will be heard when the Lord descends from heaven (1 Thess. iv. 16), accompanied by his "mighty angels." (2 Thess. i. 7.) In the former passage three things seem mentioned; the shout from the Lord (comp. Rev. x. 3)—the voice of the archangel—and the trump of God. Some, however, understand the two latter as exegetical, or explanatory of the first.

In Heb. i. and ii. the apostle shews the infinite superiority of the Son in comparison with angels. One of his proofs from the Old Testament is in i. 6: "And again, when he bringeth in the first-begotten into the world, he saith, And let all the angels of God wor-

ship him;" which is quoted from Ps. xcvii. 7, according to the Septuagint.[8] When the first-begotten (comp. Ps. lxxxix. 27; Rom. viii. 29; Col. i. 15; Prov. viii. 22-31) is introduced into the world with all the circumstances of glory and greatness, the angels are called upon to adore him; a plain argument for their inferiority. The above psalm begins, "The Lord reigneth; let the earth rejoice; let the multitude of isles be glad." This is "the world to come," to which the apostle refers (ii. 5), and which, he says, God hath not put in subjection unto the *angels* (who had so much to do with the past dispensation, ii. 2), but, as he proceeds to shew from Ps. viii., unto the Son of man, the Messiah, —Jesus in his glorified humanity. It is the theme of wonder and admiration to the psalmist, who is standing, as it were, in the midst of millennial felicity, that man, or human nature in the person of Christ, should be thus exalted.[9] After shewing that *all* that

[8] See Davidson's *Sacred Hermeneutics*, p. 426.

[9] So Theophyl. Ταῦτα δὲ πάντα καὶ εἰς τὴν κοινὴν ἀνθρωπότητα εἴρηται, κυριώτερον δε ὅμως ἁρμόσειεν ἀν τῷ Χριστῷ κατὰ σάρκα. Καὶ γὰρ ὁ υἱὸς τοῦ Θεοῦ οὐδὲν

is here mentioned is not yet fulfilled, the apostle says, "But we behold crowned with glory and honour, on account of his having suffered death, Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels, in order that he, by the grace of God, should taste death for every one."[1] We infer from this, that human nature (putting sin, of course, out of the question) is but a little inferior to angelic. Man, we remember, was originally made in the image of God.

Copious mention of the ministry of angels occurs in the Apocalypse. The subject of this deeply-interesting and important book being "God on the throne of his government in his relation to the nations,"[2] rather than truth specially pertaining to the church *as such*, the medium of communication is an angel (*v.* 1). We have not yet fellowship with God in his relation to the destinies and control

οὖσαν τῆν ἀνθρωπίνην φύσιν ἐπεσκέψατο, καὶ προσλαβόμενος αὐτὴν, καὶ ἐνώσας ἑαυτῷ, πάντων ἀνώτερος ἐδείχθη.

[1] Craik's *Amended Translation*. So likewise Diodati arranges the clauses.

[2] See *Thoughts on the Apocalypse*. By Benjamin Wills Newton.

of the nations: hence the peculiar and *distant* mode in which these visions were communicated to John; in keeping with which also was the trumpet-sound (ver. 10,) that first called his attention to them.

It is rather singular that the "angels of the churches" (i. 20, etc.) should by any have been taken in a literal sense, as guardian angels. It is incredible, either that such should be found failing in their office, or that John should be instructed to communicate with them by letters.[8] Angels are described as

[8] To understand by the "angel" those in whom (whether one, or few, or many) was vested the oversight of the church, and who were more particularly responsible to the Lord for its condition, satisfies every requirement in these epistles. Thus, supposing that, as was the case about thirty years before (Acts xx. 17), there was a plurality of elders in the church at Ephesus when John wrote to it, they would all be comprehended in the compendious expression "angel;" the *individualization*, so to speak, of the amount of gift for rule and oversight possessed by each body; which, in an age when spiritual endowment was probably still abundant, it is scarcely *likely* rested in any instance in only *one* person. Applied to those who specially communicate *to* their brethren the word of God (Heb. xiii. 7), and on the other hand "give account" to God *of* them (Heb. xiii. 17), the word "angel" is very appropriate.

joining with the glorified saints in singing the praises of the "Lamb that was slain." "And I heard the voice of many angels around the throne, and the living creatures, and the elders: and the number of them was myriads of myriads, and thousands of thousands; saying, Worthy is the Lamb that hath been slain," etc. (v. 11, 12.) From this chapter and the preceding, they seem not to stand so near the throne as the representatives of the redeemed. (See also vii. 11.) This passage moreover gives us an idea of their vast numbers.

We read much in the prophets and the Psalms of a remnant of the Jews, who, after having been brought through the tribulation of the last days, will be finally established in their land under the blessings of the new covenant. (See *e.g.* Isaiah vi. 13; x. 20-22; xxv.—xxvii., lxiv., lxv. 8-10; Jer xxxi.; Hos. ii.; Joel ii. 32; Mic. iv. 7; Zeph. iii. 12, 13; Zech. xii., xiii.; Mal. iii. 3-5, iv. 2, 3, etc., etc.) This remnant appears to be the same as the 144,000 mentioned Rev. vii. An angel, having the seal of the living God, seals these "servants of God" in their foreheads,

that they may be preserved through the fires of the closing period of the age. (Comp. ix. 4.) Thus, while some angels receive a commission to hurt the earth and the sea (vii. 2), this one provides that those whom God has determined to preserve shall be unharmed in the midst of the judgments, which to them may be purifying indeed, but will not be consuming.

Just previously to the sounding of the seven trumpets (viii. 2), John beheld an angel engaged in a priestly ministration at the golden altar in heaven. "And another angel came and stood at the altar, having a censer of gold; and there was given unto him much incense, that he should put (it) to the prayers of all saints upon the altar of gold which was before the throne. And the smoke of the incense went up with the prayers of the saints out of the angel's hand before God. And the angel took the censer, and filled it with the fire of the altar, and cast (it) into the earth: and there were thunderings, and lightnings, and voices, and an earthquake." (ver. 3-5.) The time is at hand for the execution of the terrible judgments of God on

the world; silent preparations for them are made in heaven (ver. 1, 2); and it seems that the prayers of the saints on earth are the immediate cause of the inflictions that follow each successive blast of the trumpets. The incense of course indicates the value of Christ's mediation, the sanction of his name added to their prayers. The censer filled with fire which was then cast to the earth, is symbolic of the holiness of God brought into direct collision with the earth and its inhabitants, the terrible results of which appear in the following parts of the book; and the thunders, lightnings, voices, and earthquakes, are premonitory of what is at hand. The circumstance of an *angel's* ministering at the altar is in itself evidence that no part of the "royal priesthood" (1 Pet. ii. 9) has at this time entered upon its priestly functions above. (Rev. xx. 6.) On the other hand, in ch. v. 8, where (anticipatively) the whole church was seen in heaven, the elders are described as having "golden bowls full of incense, which are the prayers of the saints;" *i.e.* of Israel on the earth in the millennium, who are referred to ver. 10, "And thou hast

made them unto our God a kingdom and priests, and they reign on the earth.[4] In that age, Christ and his church will be to Israel and the converted nations of the earth, what Aaron and his sons were to the congregation of old. The heavenly priestly family will then have been fully constituted above, and will minister, together with their Great Head, for blessing to mankind.

In that age, the golden censer will no more empty its fire upon the earth, nor will the ministrations at the golden altar be the occasion of bringing down upon it wrath instead of mercies.

The proper reading of chapter viii. 13, is, "And I saw, and heard an *eagle* flying in the mid-heaven," etc. With this has been compared Hos. viii. 1. (The common text has "heard an *angel* flying.")

It does not come within the scope of this paper to notice the operations of *evil* angels; an important subject truly, and ordinarily too little dwelt upon, but one that requires

[4] Tregelles's *Revelation from Ancient Authorities*, from which also the succeeding quotations from the Apocalypse in this paper are taken.

separate consideration. Passing over, therefore, chap. ix., and only remarking of the "mighty angel" in chap. x. that he is unquestionably the Lord himself, beheld in the vision as come to claim for his own the dominion of the earth and the sea, that is, the sovereignty of the world (comp. xi. 15), we come to xii. 7, where we read, "And there was war in heaven: Michael and his angels —to war with the dragon; and the dragon warred and his angels; and he prevailed not; neither was their place found any more in heaven. And the great dragon was cast out, the old serpent, that is called the Devil and Satan, who deceiveth the whole world: he was cast out into the world, and his angels were cast out with him."

Satan and his angels have access at present to heaven itself. Into the very presence of God our great adversary is still permitted to carry his accusations against us. What he did of old against Job he does yet against every one of the Lord's servants, whose contest is indeed not against flesh and blood, but against *wicked spirits in heavenly places.* (Eph. vi. 12.) The priesthood and interces-

sion of Christ meet the ceaseless charges which the enemy brings against them in heaven, and the "armour of God" is their safeguard against his wiles upon earth. The time, however, will at length come when he and his will be forcibly and for ever expelled from heaven. Of the nature of the conflict, which ends in his being cast out, we are of course ignorant. We see only that he obstinately disputes his ground to the last, and is vanquished by Michael at the head of a host of angels, before whom the apostate powers and their head are driven to the earth, where, until the Lord's advent, they will keep a brief but fearful carnival of delusion, blasphemy, and blood.

Their expulsion is well understood in heaven to be the pledge of the reign of Christ being near at hand: "And I heard a loud voice in heaven, saying, Now hath come the salvation, and the power, and the kingdom of our God, and the authority of his Christ; because the accuser of our brethren hath been cast out, who accused them before our God day and night." (ver. 10.) This voice is probably that of the martyrs (vi. 9-11),

who may *perhaps* be again referred to xvi. 11, "I heard the altar say," etc. The joy, however, of the inhabitants of heaven, on being thus relieved from hearing these incessant accusations of Satan, is not shared by those on earth; "Therefore rejoice, (ye) heavens, and ye that dwell in them. Woe to the earth and to the sea! because the devil hath come down unto you, having great wrath, knowing that he hath but a short time." (ver. 12.)[5]

[5] To present in detail the considerations in support of the view, that Satan's expulsion from the heavens is an event yet future, and that it will take place three years and a half before the Lord's coming, would involve the introduction of almost the whole subject of apocalyptic interpretation. Those who, like the writer, are satisfied of the fallacy of what is called the "year-day system," and who believe that the 1260 days (xii. 6), the time, times, and half a time (xii. 14), and the forty-two months (xi. 2), all mean literally a period of three years and a half, will of course need no further proof. It may, however, be remarked, that Eph. vi. 12 does not seem to countenance the idea (which would be involved in the contrary theory), that for so long a time as 1260 *years*, conflict with "wicked spirits in heavenly places" would cease to be the church's lot; nor are the expressions "*now* is come," &c. (Rev. xii. 10), and "a *short* time," (ver. 12,) easy to be reconciled with so protracted a period.

From Rev. xiv. 6, it appears that shortly before the time of the end, there will be an extensive testimony to the grace of God—a final offer of the gospel to all nations, accompanied by the warning of judgment being at hand: "And I saw another angel flying in the mid-heaven, having the everlasting gospel to preach unto those that dwell on the earth, and unto every nation, and tribe, and

Moreover, when Satan is expelled, it is as the dragon with seven heads and *ten horns* (ver. 3), that is, at the time that he sustains the authority and guides the energies of the ten sovereigns who will reign over the ten final divisions of the Roman world (both in its eastern and western parts).

That this tenfold division of the *whole* Roman empire will be just at the close of its history, appears from Dan. ii. The ten toes are at the very extremity of the image, and when developed the stone falls upon *them* (ver. 34). It is in the days of *these kings* that the kingdom of Christ is set up (ver. 44). So also the ten horns of the fourth beast (Dan. vii.), which are explained to be ten kings (ver. 24), exist at the time of the judgment (ver. 26, 27; comp. Rev. xvii. 12-14). It has been truly observed, that the Roman world has never yet, in its eastern and western parts, presented a tenfold division, and that whenever it is made, it will be too palpable to be mistaken; as clear and undoubted, in fact, as any part of the prophecy of the image or of the four beasts, which has already become matter of plain and uncontroverted history.

tongue, and people; saying with a loud voice, Fear God, and give glory to him! because the hour of his judgment is come; and worship him that made the heaven, and the earth, and sea, and fountains of waters." There is no reason to doubt that this gracious message will be proclaimed by *men*, but the flight of the angel may signify the rapidity with which this closing work of evangelization will be effected, and (but this does not necessarily follow) that the ministry of angels will help it forward. It is rather to digress from our subject, but we may perhaps infer from other Scriptures which describe the state of things just previous to the Lord's return, that not very many will be affected by this preaching. The language indeed of verse 7 appears to intimate that the most part will have then ceased even to own God as Creator, or else that they are about to sink to that extreme point of infidelity; and this is in accordance with what we learn elsewhere. (See Isa. ii.; Zech. xiii. 2; Rev. ix. 20, xiii. 4, 6-8, 15.) Though a comparison with chapter xiii. (see especially verse 7) would lead to the conclusion that the sphere of this testimony is

mainly the *prophetic* earth, it may nevertheless extend to outside nations, but still with some limitation, as it appears from Isa. lxvi. 15, 16, 19, that some will be converted after the judgment who have never before heard of the Lord.

Another angel follows in the vision, announcing the fall of Babylon (ver. 8). This indeed is not yet literally a fact, for her judgment is quite at the last (xix. 1-7), but it is true *to faith*, and even while she yet "sits as a queen," the testimony of the servants of God will be to the certainty and nearness of her fall. (xviii. 7, 8.) It is not however to be necessarily inferred from this verse that any actual angelic ministry is linked with this testimony. It may only be a symbolic way of communicating instruction to John and to the church. The same may be said concerning the following verse.

In verse 14, the Son of man is described on the point of reaping the harvest of the earth. Though coming on the clouds in glory, it is still in the character of the servant of God, and so an angel from the temple is represented in the vision as conveying to him

the divine mandate to thrust in his sickle and reap. The agency employed in this (Matthew xiii. 37—43) has already been noticed.

The "harvest" is a time of mingled mercy and judgment, when the wheat is gathered into the garner, and the tares are burned; but the "vintage" which follows is judgment *alone*. In the ripened clusters of "the vine of the earth" we recognise the symbol of the matured results of the godless energies of apostate men, as they will be found flourishing in all luxuriance in the last days. The gathering of the clusters, and their being cast into the wine-press (verses 18, 19), evidently signifies the collecting together of these wicked persons preparatory to their being destroyed. An angel comes out from the altar, "who hath authority over fire," probably meaning the fire of the altar, emblem of the divine holiness. In the light, as it were, of that holiness, he contemplates the vine of the earth, and seeing that its grapes are fully ripe, commands the other angel with a sharp sickle (ver. 17) to gather them. It is done; and the awful act of judgment

succeeds (ver. 20). We know that unclean spirits will gather the hosts of the enemies of the Lord to Armageddon. (xvi. 13-16.) And by the angel's reaping may be signified here, that angelic agency will subsequently bring down the vast army to the place without the city (xiv. 20), where, as grapes trodden in the wine-press, they will be destroyed by the Lord. (See xix. 11-21.) From Joel iii. 1, 2, 9-17, the scene of the judgment would seem to be the valley of Jehoshaphat.

By seven angels will be inflicted the seven last plagues that complete the wrath of God. (xv. 1; xvi.) The resemblance of these to the plagues of Egypt has often been noticed. In xvi. 5, "the angel of the waters" glorifies God for the righteous retribution which has turned them into blood. May we not infer from this expression, that certain angels are specially appointed to the oversight of the different elements and departments of the natural world? Such an idea need not be rejected because it is found in the Rabbinical writings.

The seven angels, who issue from the sym-

bolic temple (xv. 6), are clothed in "pure, bright linen," indicative of purity and holiness; and they are girded with "girdles of gold," perhaps emblematic of the divine power which strengthens them for their work.

On the eve of the great final battle between the Lord, followed by the hosts of heaven, and the beast with his confederate kings, John saw "an angel standing in the sun," as it were the eye of heaven,[6] and summoning all the fowls that fly in the mid-heaven to "the great supper of God," in order that they might "eat the flesh of kings, and the flesh of chief captains, and the flesh of mighty men, and the flesh of horses, and of those that sit on them, and the flesh of all (men), both free and bond, both small and great." (xix. 17, 18.) This is an awfully sublime and terrible scene. The Pharaoh, so to speak, of the last days, is preparing to confront the power of the Lord, and, like his

[6] An ancient comparison. We find *ὄμμα αἰθέρος* used for the sun (Aristoph. *Nub.* 286), and *σεμνὸν Ζηνὸς ὄμμα* (Eurip. *Hipp.* 885). So *νυκτὸς ὄμμα* (*Iph.* T. 110) for *the moon.*

prototype of old, consciously to measure his strength with the might of heaven, and ere the winepress is trodden, and the river of blood (xiv. 20) flows from it, we behold innumerable fowls flocking from all parts to their yet living but certain prey. We may figure to ourselves the adjacent regions covered with these bidden guests; the air resounding with the rustling of their wings; numbers perched on the ridges of the valley that is presently to be the scene of slaughter. An agency more than human has already gathered the impious multitude to the place where they are to meet their doom: and though the piercing sight of the eagle has descried as yet no carcass in the distance, a supernatural influence has likewise gathered these countless myriads of fowls in anticipation of their banquet of human flesh.

The destruction of the beast and his army is immediately followed by the imprisonment of Satan in the abyss for a thousand years (xx. 1-3). This is the work of an angel who comes down from heaven, and lays hold on the arch fiend, who after the defeat of his plans is still lurking somewhere on the earth,

which is now to be delivered from his malignity and delusions, and no more to be exposed to them, till the short closing period when wicked men and devils will be allowed to afford the last proof of the incorrigible evil of their natures, and when they will bring upon themselves the fearful doom which is the destiny alike of the deceiver and the deceived.

At the twelve gates of the heavenly city were seen twelve angels (xxi. 12). They appear to be stationed there as keepers of the entrances to this glorious abode of the redeemed.

The angel who shewed John the things described in this precious book, is the last on record that has been seen by man. We know not that any one has since appeared, or will yet appear, in visible form, before the hour arrives for the gathering together of the elect.

Among the pleasures of heaven is to be reckoned acquaintance and fellowship with those bright and holy beings, our fellow-servants. We shall also then fully know how much (under God) we have been indebted to

them for their watchful care in the days of our frail and weak humanity. We shall see those mighty but yet gentle, those wise but yet lowly spirits, who during all our life ministered to our safety, comfort, and welfare, who rejoiced at our conversion, who were spectators of our walk, our warfare, and our worship, who finally carried our departing spirits to Him who gave them. Patriarchs and prophets, apostles and servants of God, will meet with the heavenly visitors, whom some of them entertained upon earth, and by whom in every variety of circumstance they were protected, taught, and comforted. From first to last, what a crowd of happy reminiscences will enhance the joy of that meeting-day! Abraham's guests at Mamre will stand with him around the throne of God. And when the beloved disciple sings with all the company of the redeemed the new song, amidst the ten thousand times ten thousand angelic voices that join in chorus will be heard that of the angel who brought to him at Patmos the revelation of coming things.

"To testify these things in the churches,"

was the important mission of the angel who was thus the honoured medium of communicating the last words that Christ addressed to his people. Great, unquestionably, was the privilege to have been charged with the exhibition of the splendid panorama of the future that was thus presented to the view of John. But the celestial messenger neither shares in the emotion, nor countenances the weakness, which were manifested even by that great apostle when he had seen and heard these things (xx. 8). In no unguarded moment is he surprised into forgetfulness of the Master's honour or the servant's place. Unconcerned about his own dignity, his sole aim is to give prominence to the revelations he has communicated. A tone of peculiar earnestness and solemnity marks the words with which, at the close, he addresses John: "These words are faithful and true; and the Lord God of the spirits of the prophets hath sent his angel to shew unto his servants things that must come to pass speedily. And behold, I come quickly: blessed is he that keepeth the words of the prophecy of this book." (xxii. 6, 7.) And again does he

emphatically commend them to the attention of the people of God, when he calls himself the fellow servant of John, and of John's brethren the prophets, and of "*those who keep the words of this book.*" (ver. 9.)

Thus have we taken a bird's-eye view of (it is believed) all the principal passages of Scripture relative to the interesting subject it was proposed to consider. In the necessarily brief review of so many, and some of them difficult passages, no one can expect to carry with him throughout the judgment of every reader. It is hoped, however, that unbecoming positiveness on doubtful points has been avoided. Such at least was the writer's desire. The modest diffidence with which a heathen philosopher once prefaced what he had to say on a then obscure subject, deserves to be imitated by those who rejoice in light to which he was a stranger: "Ea quæ vis, ut potero, explicabo: nec tamen quasi Pythius Apollo, certa ut sint et fixa quæ dixero; sed ut homunculus unus e multis, probabilia conjectura sequens. Ultra enim quo progrediar, quam ut veri similia videam, non habeo: certa dicent hi, qui et

percipi ea posse dicunt, et se sapientes esse profitentur."[7]

[7] "I will explain the things you desire to the best of my ability: yet not like the Pythian Apollo, as laying down what is certain and positive; but rather as a simple man—one of many, following conjecturally that which is probable. For I can only go to the extent of what appears conformable to truth; leaving it to those persons to speak with positiveness, who maintain that certainty is attainable, and who profess themselves to be wise."—*Cicero, Tusc.* i. 9.

The Separate State

OF THE

SPIRITS OF THE RIGHTEOUS

BETWEEN

DEATH AND RESURRECTION.

ON THE SEPARATE STATE,*

&c.

HAD we no express declaration in the New. Testament of the happy condition of the souls of the righteous in the interval betwixt death and resurrection, it might nevertheless have been inferred from the broad and general consideration of their standing. They who in the present world have been quickened together with Christ (Eph. ii. 5), who in respect of sin, and of all pertaining to the old creation, are dead, and who as new creatures possess a life that is hid with Christ in God, (Col. iii. 3,)—might well be relieved of all apprehensions relative to the intermediate state of departed spirits. For it would seem incredible, *à priori*, either that the functions

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of their new and divine life should ever be suspended, so that they should pass at death into unconsciousness,[1] or that the change which then takes place should bring them into a position inferior and less desirable than that which they occupied in the body.

It was intended that the hope of the Lord's return should be vividly entertained by each living generation of true believers. They were to wait for the Son of God from heaven (1 Thess. i. 10); and the last words of the last of the inspired writers (with the exception of the closing benediction) reiterate the cheering promise, "Yea, I come quickly;" to which the ready response is, "Amen. Come, Lord Jesus." The striking prominence every where in the New Testament given to this "blessed hope" is evidence of its powerfully influential character both for warning and comfort. *Christ's coming to the living* is the ever-recurring testimony of the Spirit; whilst the *departure of the soul to Him* is a far less frequent subject of allusion, and one incidentally rather than systematically treated of.

[1] See Appendix A.

Notwithstanding, however, that present oneness of life with the risen Jesus, and an actual place in the heavenlies in Him, (Eph. ii. 6,) appear plainly to involve the conscious felicity of the departed spirit; and that the fulness of revelation bears on the resurrection rather than on the Separate State; the special comfort is still realized of certain passages which clearly and directly refer to the latter. To bring these together, accompanied by a few remarks and explanations, may not be unacceptable to the Christian reader.

The first to be considered is Luke xvi. 19-31. It is of little consequence what were the prevailing opinions of the orthodox Jews, in our Lord's time, on this subject. If they were correct, still they would not be required to corroborate or explain a divine revelation; if otherwise, they would be still less worthy of attention. In either case, the idea should be discarded that the Lord designedly framed this description so as to harmonize with the popular view of the day. An idea indeed that is not admissible, when it is a question of the words and teaching of inspired truth—of that which is perfect and

all-complete by itself; not framed upon human thoughts, whether Jewish or Gentile, or deriving its colouring from them, but, like its author, light without any darkness at all.

In explaining a parabolic discourse an interpreter may err, not only by attaching doctrinal value to circumstances that belong merely to its imagery or ornaments, but also by classing with the latter features that are really important, if not essential. Now in the parable before us there is nothing to forbid the idea that we have a true delineation of the state of the dead under the past dispensation, when, as appears from many passages of the Old Testament, *hades* was the place to which the spirits of the saved and the lost were alike consigned. It appears from this scripture, 1. That both good and bad pass at once after death into a state of conscious bliss or misery; 2. That angels are employed to carry the former to their appointed locality; 3. That though separated by a wide chasm from the place of torment for the lost, yet the abode of Abraham and his true children was but another *compartment* of the common hades, which

would appear from many Scriptural allusions (as Deut. xxxii. 22; Job xi. 1; Amos ix. 2, &c.) to be in the lower parts of the earth. When the ghost of Samuel announced to Saul, "To-morrow shalt thou and thy sons be with me," (1 Sam. xxviii. 19,) it does not, as Campbell observes,[2] "imply that their condition would be the same, though each would have his place in the receptacle of departed spirits." The reader may refer, if he pleases, to the professor's further remarks on this parable, and on the subject of hades generally, and compare them with the opposite view of Bishop Pearson,[3] that "there is no certainty that the souls of the just, the patriarchs, and the rest of the people of God, were kept in any place below, which was, or may be called the hell: the bosom of Abraham (he continues) might well be in the heavens above . . . . . the scriptures nowhere tell us that the spirits of just men went unto, or did remain in hell," &c. Most of the ancient fathers of the Church,[4] how-

[2] Preliminary Dissert. vi. part 2. Ἀιδης and Γεεννα.
[3] On the Creed, Art. v.
[4] So also the Pharisees among the Jews. See Josephus in the discourse ascribed to him. Antiq. J. xviii. c. 2.

ever, he states, believed that the just were rewarded, as well as the unjust punished, ὑπὸ χθονὸς or καθ' ᾅδου (below ground, or down in Hades), nor does the learned prelate produce any direct or conclusive argument for the contrary. If the Hebrew word *sheol* be taken as a general designation for the receptacle of all the dead, there appears no reason why, for want of a now equivalent English word, the original should not be retained, or else rendered uniformly by hades[5] (as almost everywhere in the LXX). The context would be a sufficient indication whether a general or special import is to be attached to it. "Grave" expresses too little, and "hell" (as now understood) too much. To discuss, how-

[5] In the Greek Mythology, Hades, afterwards called also Pluton, was god of the lower world. By post-Homeric writers the name was also used as an appellative for the *nether-world, the grave, death.* "The etymology of hades is uncertain," some derive it from ἀ-ιδεῖν, whence it would signify "the god who makes invisible," and others from ἄδω or χάδω; so that Hades would mean "the all-embracer," or "all-receiver." (*Smith's Dict. of Biog. and Myth.*) *Sheol* is derived by Gesenius and Fürst from שָׁאַל *i.q.* שָׁעַל *to dig, to excavate;* so that its meaning would be, *a hollow and subterranean place.*

ever, the arguments for and against this view, would be rather beside the object of this paper, in which the present rather than the past state of the dead is considered. A remark or two will only be added. 1. From Psalm xvi. 10, comp. with Acts ii. 27-31, the natural inference appears to be that, for the soul in that dispensation to go to *sheol*, was as much the lot of man in general, as for the body to see corruption. The words "soul" and "sheol" are found together again in the following Psalms, where it would seem but reasonable to attach to both the meaning it is certain they have in Psalm xvi.; viz., Psalm xxx. 3; xlix. 15; lxxxvi. 13; lxxxix. 4-8; "What man is he that liveth, and shall not see death? Shall he deliver his soul from the hand of Sheol?" 2. The word rephaim (always rendered "dead" or "deceased" in our common version), means the shades or spirits of the departed.

> "The shades tremble from beneath,
> The waters, and their inhabitants.
> Sheol is naked before him,
> And Destruction hath no covering."
>
> Job xxvi. 5, 6. (Barnes.)

That is, "The whole universe is under the control of God, and trembles before him. Sheol and its shades, the oceans and their inhabitants stand in awe before him."

In Psalm lxxxviii., which abounds in phraseology connected with death, we read,

> "To the dead wilt thou shew wonders?
> Shall the rephaim arise and praise thee?" (*v.* 11.)

Here again the rephaim, or shades, evidently refer to the dead in general. In Proverbs ii. 18, the wicked are specially intended, as also in ch. ix. 18, which also shews that the rephaim dwell in sheol.

> "But he knoweth not that the rephaim (are) there;
> (And) in the depth of sheol her guests."

The same appears from Isaiah xiv. 9. The word thus appears to designate generally the spirits of both good and bad, and like "sheol," with which it is found associated, as in the above instances, to depend upon the context for the precise line of thought to be connected with it. 3. The expression "to be gathered to one's people," or "to one's fathers," is, as observed by Gesenius (*Heb. Lex.*), "distinguished both from death and

burial." (See Gen. xxv. 8, xxxv. 29, xlix. 29-33; 2 Kings xxii. 20.) And it is used of all persons indiscriminately. (Jud. ii. 10.) 4. That קבר (*keber*), the common word for sepulchre or grave, occurs no less than seventy times, should be remembered by those who would in many places attach the same signification to שׁאול (*sheol*). Upon the whole, then, it is submitted that the general tendency of Old Testament phraseology and allusions appears in favour of that view concerning hades, which the parable in Luke xvi. naturally also suggests; and, moreover, that there is, on the other hand, far less to advance in favour of the view, that the spirits of the righteous went to *heaven*.

The ancient belief, that their condition is different since the death and resurrection of the Lord to what it was before, will be easily embraced by those who concur in the above conclusion. That the completion of Christ's redemption work should sensibly affect the separate spirits of the saved is, *à priori*, not an improbable supposition. And without their being, as far as the writer is aware, any passage that directly asserts it, those

texts that allude to their present felicity, contrasted with the very different state and locality of the wicked, would lead almost necessarily to such a conclusion.

In Romans x. 7, the "abyss" is evidently equivalent to hades. And one obvious inference from the passage is, that Christ rose once and for ever ἐκ νεκρῶν,—from the dead *in general*, from the deep wherein all alike were found.

Phil. ii. 10, relates to a period when the three classes of beings, those in heaven, those on earth, and those under the earth, will all acknowledge the lordship of Jesus. It is not said that this belongs to the present time; nor does it probably relate to the ulterior state, when death and hades will merge, so to speak, into the lake of fire. (Rev. xx. 14.) Καταχθόνιοι, *those under the earth*, "is best explained by Theodoret and many eminent *modern* expositors, to denote *the souls of the departed* (over whom Jesus Christ is alike Lord). (See Rom xiv. 9.)"[6] Those who recognize an intermediate dispensation to follow the present, and to precede the new heavens

[6] Bloomfield, Gr. Test.

and new earth, will have no difficulty in referring this passage to it. The age which will be ushered in by the second coming of the Lord, the resurrection of the faithful dead, and the transformation of the living, will find the church of the first-born in heaven; Israel and other Gentile nations in the flesh in blessing on the earth, and the departed wicked still awaiting, in the depths of hades, the period when they shall be summoned before the great white throne, to receive the awful sentence which will consign them to their terrible and final doom.

Rev. v. affords the best illustration of the preceding text. It manifestly relates to the dispensation above alluded to. The glorified church in heaven, represented by the living creatures, and the throned elders, sings the praises of redemption, (*v.* 9,) and in verse 10 speaks of Israel thus, "And thou hast made them unto our God a kingdom and priests: and they reign on the earth."[7] In verse 3, it is said, "No one in heaven, nor on

[7] Tregelles's *Book of Revelation from Ancient Authorities*.—Bagster.

the earth, neither *under the earth*[8] (ὑποκάτω τῆς γῆς) was able," &c.; and in verse 13, "And every creature which is in heaven, and on the earth, and *under the earth*, and on the sea, and all things that are in them, heard I saying, Unto Him that sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb (be) blessing, and honour, and glory, and dominion, for ever and ever." Even the prisoners in the under world,—human beings and fallen spirits,—unite their involuntary homage to the joyous doxology of the heaven and the earth.

On the much-controverted passage 1 Pet. iii. 18-20, the view taken here is what was long since given by Beza, Bishop Pearson, and others; viz., that Christ by his Spirit preached to the antediluvians by Noah, whose spirits are *now* in prison. Not that the condemned of other ages are not there too; but the apostle seems specially to allude to the

[8] Many of the old expositors understood Eph. iv. 9, of hades. But τῆς γῆς is perhaps better taken with Bloomfield, Pearson, and others, as a genitive of *explanation*. Christ's descent to earth, and his incarnation on earth, terminating with his descent into the grave, is what is signified. "He also descended into the lower *parts (namely)* of the earth."

days of Noah, on account of the parallelism betwixt them and the present age; and for the purpose of the typical instruction connected with the ark, and the right of baptism, which he proceeds to deduce. That is, as the disobedient *then* had their day of grace, and for despising the long-suffering of God, are now in prison awaiting the final judgment, whilst Noah and his family were saved by water, so the present is also a time of long-suffering to all, and in which true believers are saved by baptism, or, as the apostle explains, by that which baptism typifies, *the resurrection of Jesus Christ.*

We might almost fancy we had a fragment of Æschylus[9] before us, in that striking expression of Peter, *σειραῖς ζόφου ταρταρώσας παρέδωκεν κ. τ. λ.* "having thrust (them) down

[9] Comp. *Prom. Vinct.* 152-5:—

εἰ γάρ μ' ὑπὸ γὴν νέρθεν τ'ἀΐδου
τοῦ νεκροδέγμονος εἰς ἀπέραντον
Τάρταρον ἦκεν, δεσμοῖς ἀλύτοις
ἀγρίοις πελάσας,—

Would that below earth, and beneath hades
the receiver of the dead, to impassable
Tartarus he had sent me, to bonds indissoluble,
cruel, bringing me,—

to Tartarus, delivered (them) to chains of darkness, to be reserved unto judgment." (2 Pet. ii. 4.) These fallen angels, mentioned also by Jude (6), it may be remarked by the way, should not be confounded with Satan and his angels, who are not yet chained in darkness as these are. They are manifestly a particular class by themselves. The legion of demons mentioned in the gospels dreaded being sent into the abyss (εἰς τὴν ἄβυσσον). (Luke viii. 31.) From the same abyss issue the vast swarm of evil spirits, the mystic locusts, the symbolic description of which is given in Rev. ix. And the beast, the last great enemy of Christ and his people, ascends from the same place (Rev. xi. 7, xvii. 8) in which Satan himself is to be shut up for a thousand years (xx. 3).

Rev. xx. 12-15, carries us to the final consummation. The sea, death, and hades, as it were personified, like three jailors, deliver up their prisoners. All that is conveyed is, that those who have met their death in the sea, and who through death (of whatever kind) have gone to hades,[1] will be re-united

[1] *See ch. vi.* 8, where *hades* follows close upon *death.*

to bodies, and be judged; after which, "death, which consists in the separation of the soul from the body, and the state of souls intervening between death and judgment, shall be no more." The second death, or the lake of fire, will thenceforth be the everlasting lot of those who have died in their sins and unbelief (xxi. 8), and whose names are not found in the book of life.

After the above rapid glance at the "under world," which it is maintained was of old the common abode of all separate spirits, but since the great work of the Saviour, alone the prison of the wicked, we may turn to the more pleasing part of the subject, the place and state of those who now depart in the saving faith of Jesus. The place, we may gather in the first instance, from Luke xxiii. 43, to be *paradise*. The astonishing faith of the robber, who recognized in Him who was crucified at his side, the dignity of the Lord and King of Israel, and said, "Lord, remember me when thou comest in thy kingdom," was met by the riches of his grace, who went

An intimation, it would seem, that they who thus perish are finally lost.

even beyond the prayer of the petition, and said, "Verily I say unto thee, To-day shalt thou be with me in paradise."[2] We could linger with delight upon this most precious illustration of free grace,—upon the transcendent virtue of that wondrous cross, by which not merely this poor helpless sinner was saved without the co-operation of works or ordinances, which, if out of the question in any instance, were in the uttermost sense impossible in this one; upon the marvellous blending of weakness and power in the divine sufferer, who, whilst dying the most ignominious and accursed of all deaths, could extend forgiveness, and open the gates of the kingdom to one of the worst of mankind; upon the deep malignity and horrible nature of sin, not to be pardoned on any other consideration than the shedding of the blood of the eternal and incarnate Son of God; and

[2] Those who have proposed to put a comma after *σήμερον* do violence to the passage. As Theophylact observes; *ἄλλοι δὲ ἐκβιάζονται τὸ ῥῆμα, στίζοντες εἰς τὸ σήμερον, ἵν' ᾖ τὸ λεγόμενον τοιοῦτον, ἀμὴν λέγω σοι σήμερον, εἶτα τὸ μετ' ἐμοῦ ἔσῃ ἐν τῷ παραδείσῳ ἐπιφέροντες.*

upon that inconceivable love in God the Father, who spared not his only-begotten Son, but gave Him up, that "whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life;" upon things such as these might we linger, and, familiar as they may be, they should never weary. With relish uncloyed by oft past enjoyment, with admiration unabated by frequency of contemplation, with ardour undiminished by repeated experiences, we should ever dwell on the stupendous theme of a crucified Saviour. A stumbling-block, as of old, unto the self-righteous, and foolishness to the wise of this world; but the power of God, and the wisdom of God, to the called of all nations.

But, confining ourselves for the present purpose to the Lord's words to the repentant malefactor, we enquire, was the promise a special one made to him? Was his to be an exception to the general lot of other saved persons, like that of Enoch and Elijah (and perhaps Moses), in the past dispensations? This is possible; but it is more probable that this man's entrance into paradise that day marked the beginning of a new era, in

respect to the place and state of the saved dead;—that what was his lot, henceforth became that of all justified persons after death. This view seems both to put greater honour on the Lord's work, and to agree well with the impression received from the other passages that remain to be produced.

Paradise can by no means be identical, as many have thought, with the compartment in hades assigned to the righteous. If it be, as Campbell says, "another name for what is, in the parable, called Abraham's bosom," then would the prayer of the robber have been far less wonderfully answered, than on the view that he was promised something much beyond the heretofore lot of the departed. To share with the righteous the bliss of Abraham's bosom would indeed have been a great thing; but the desire of faith that even at such an hour could anticipate the future glories of the kingdom, and recognize the verity of the triple inscription on the cross of Jesus, it is likely would be answered by something more pointed and peculiar than the assurance of a participation in what had ever been the general destiny of all. Nor,

from the way in which paradise is subsequently mentioned in the New Testament, can it be supposed to have any connection with hades; and that there is more than *one* paradise is a gratuitous supposition.

The Lord Jesus unquestionably went on the day of his death to hades, or the "hell" of the creed. But because He is God, He was, and always is, everywhere. We can believe the fact, though we cannot explain in what manner the pardoned criminal was on the same day, not only in paradise, but there *with Christ.*

Let us pass on to the only two other places where paradise is alluded to.

2 Cor. xii. 1-4. The third heaven, according to the general and probably correct view, is the heaven properly so called, the abode of God and the angels; the other two being the region of the clouds and atmosphere, and the sidereal, or place of the stars. That the apostle is speaking of two distinct visions, and therefore that paradise and heaven are not strictly the same, is sufficiently evident, as Campbell observes: 1. From the use of the plural, "visions and revelations" (ver. 1,7).

2. From the wording of the narrative, the apostle passing in verse 3 to a distinct transaction, introduced by "and." 3. From the repetition of his doubts (*v.* 2, 3), which would have been not only superfluous, but improper, if he had been speaking only of one event; but necessary on the supposition of two being in question. 4. From the unexampled tautology involved in the relation, if only one revelation be meant. To which he adds, "the opinion of all Christian antiquity, Origen alone excepted," which he observes, "in a question of philology, is not without its weight." But when the learned professor goes on to say, that in the word ἁρπάζω, there is nothing that answers to "caught *up*" in our version; but that the word is expressive more of the suddenness of the event, and of his own passiveness, than of the direction of the motion; he seems to overlook that the context quite bears out the common version. ἁρπαγέντα—ἕως τρίτου οὐρανοῦ, is surely correctly rendered "caught *up* to the third heaven;" and ἡρπάγη εἰς τὸν παράδεισον coming immediately after, it can scarcely be doubted, is *rightly* given by "he was caught *up* into

paradise." (Comp. 1 Thess. iv. 17; Rev. xii. 5.) At all events, the idea of a *descent* will hardly be suggested by the word in such a connection. It may be conjectured that paradise is a particular region in heaven; and the apostle's words, "whether in the body, or out of the body, I cannot tell, God knoweth," are interesting, as proving (if proof were wanted,) that the soul may have perception when out of the body, and independently of it, enjoy both sights and sounds of happiness. Of the nature of these in the present instance we know nothing, since it was not permitted to the apostle to divulge them. They are called *ἄῤῥητα ῥήματα*, ineffable words.[8]

Rev. ii. 7. "To him that overcometh will I give to eat of the tree of life, which is in the paradise of God." This relates, like all the promises to the seven churches, to the resurrection state. It is called the paradise *of God*, as marking its unearthly character,

[8] *ἄῤῥητα* is the opposite of *διδακτά*, what can be taught. Thus—

ὦ πάντα νωμῶν Τειρεσία, διδακτά τε
ἄῤῥητα τ'ουράνιά τε καὶ χθονοστιβῆ.

Soph. Œdip. Tyr. 300.

"O Teiresias who art conversant with all things, both

perhaps in contrast with the garden in Eden. What we know then of paradise is: 1. That the soul of the penitent robber was there with Jesus after death (and by probable inference, the souls of all the saved, as above remarked, are there also). 2. That Paul was taken there alive, but whether in a disembodied state or not is uncertain. 3. That it will be one of the future spheres of bliss to the people of God in the resurrection.

No use is made in this paper of the visions of heaven in the Apocalypse, as it would seem that the redeemed were beheld by John there, not in the separate state, but as they will be after the resurrection. The representation of their final state was pictured to him, and seeing heaven, he saw in vision the saints anticipatively there too.

Only in two places does he make mention of disembodied spirits. In xx. 4, where their locality is not specified, the souls of martyrs alone appear to be meant; although, as it has been remarked, by regarding this section of the redeemed as a *representative* body

communicable and unutterable, both heavenly and *earthly*."

(just as the seven churches *represent* all churches), what is said of them may be understood as true of all Christians.

When the fifth seal was opened (vi. 9-11) John beheld the souls of the martyrs (more particularly perhaps those who died for the truth in the period before mentioned in the chapter) under the altar (*i.e.* the golden altar of incense) in heaven. This altar in the tabernacle was the place of the priestly ministrations of Aaron and his sons. In heaven, it is the place of the present intercession of Christ (see ch. viii. 3) with whom his people also will hereafter minister, when, in their risen state, they shall enter upon the full functions of their priestly office. The sphere in which these souls were seen was therefore *heaven;* whether the precise spot here indicated at the foot of the altar be understood as their permanent locality whilst disembodied, or whether they may at times be there and at times in paradise.

And whatever special distinction may be inferred from this scripture to belong to the souls of martyrs, it affords of itself a good ground to conclude that those of the righ-

teous generally are at any rate somewhere in heaven. The loud cry of the souls that John saw, for divine retribution for their blood on those that dwelt on the earth, evidences their disassociation from all merely human sympathies. They only give expressions to feelings that are identical with God's thoughts, and in unison with the unbending requirements of his justice and holiness. Their position is one of *rest* and *expectation*, until others of their fellow-servants and brethren that are about to be killed as they had been, shall be completed. The white robe bestowed on each of them has been understood as the "sign of their being numbered among the overcomers."[4] (See Rev. iii. 5.) It may be a special recognition in heaven of the righteousness of those whom man has judged unworthy to live upon earth.

The entrance of the redeemed into their final and complete state of happiness is alluded to in Rev. xiv. 13. "Blessed (are) the dead who die in the Lord from henceforth: yea, saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their labours; for their works do

[4] *Thoughts on the Apocalypse.* By B. W. Newton.

follow them." Οἱ ἀποθνήσκοντες means, as it has been observed, "the dead in an abstract and collective sense, as denoting a whole class."[5] Each individual believer rests from his labours when he dies; but the whole body of the faithful dead are here spoken of as partaking of their consummated felicity. They are therefore emphatically pronounced blessed *from henceforth.* See the following verse, "And I saw, and behold a white cloud," &c.

Stephen seems not only to have been the first martyr, but also the first of the faithful who died since the completion of Christ's work. His dying words evince a clear knowledge of the felicity that awaited him immediately on his departure. "And they stoned Stephen, calling upon (Jesus), and saying, Lord Jesus, receive my spirit!" (Acts vii. 59.) He knew that his spirit would go to the glorified Son of man, whom he had just beheld standing on the right hand of God. Such was his anticipation. And it confirms the inference that was drawn from Luke xxiii. that paradise is now the place for all

[5] *Thoughts on the Apocalypse*, p. 237.

who, like the penitent robber and Stephen, fall asleep in the faith of Jesus. Nor can we fail to be struck by the contrast of this cheering prospect with the anticipations of those in previous ages, of whom it is written, that through fear of death, "they were all their life-time subject to bondage." (Heb. ii. 15.) There is indeed a vast difference between the general belief then entertained, that while the dust returns to the earth as it was, the spirit returns unto God who gave it (Eccles. xii. 7);[6] and the vivid faith grounded

[6] With this passage may be compared the other, ch. iii. 21, which, with Rosenmüller, should be regarded as parenthetical: *q. d.* very few know this. It is a rare knowledge, undiscoverable by sense, and imparted alone by divine revelation. As to themselves, and in so far as natural perceptions can judge, "man hath no pre-eminence above a beast." All the ancient, and many modern interpreters after Luther, render this verse; "who knoweth the spirit of man, *whether* it goeth upward, and the spirit of the beast, *whether* it goeth downward," &c. But although this is perhaps grammatically admissible, the common version deserves the preference; and thus also Aben Ezra and Rosenmüller render. *Revelation* teaches that the superior dignity of the human spirit over that of the beast is evinced also after death; and this probably, rather than any definite information as to *locality*, *is conveyed by* the mention of the spirit of man as going

on clear and precise revelations, that now sustains the Christian's heart, and disarms death of its chiefest terrors.

2 Cor. v. 1-9, contains a direct allusion to the separate state. If the earthly house of our tabernacle were dissolved, we have a building of God, &c., *i.e.*, a resurrection and heavenly and eternal body. Our earnest desire, the apostle goes on to say, is to be *clothed upon* (ἐπενδύσασθαι) with our house which is from (or, *of*) heaven; *i.e.*, our *heavenly* house (comp. 1 Cor. xv. 47), "the second man, the Lord, (is) from heaven, *i.e.*, heavenly." "If indeed also (*i.e.*, since) being (thus) clothed, we shall not be found naked," or, seeing that we shall really be found clothed, not naked, (*i.e.*, *without a body.*)[7] Our wish,

upward, and the spirit of the beast as going downward to the earth. Indeed, all the phraseology and sentiment of the *Old Testament* indicates a *descending* path for the disembodied spirit of a man. Nevertheless virtually, and in a *moral* sense, it may be said to 'return to God:' and it is also possible that the human spirit really ascends after death to God to receive its award, and is then conducted to its appointed place.

[7] The verse *asserts strongly*, with a view to substantiate and explain verse 2, the *truth* of the resurrection or

then, is not to get rid of the present burden of our state by being unclothed (or dying); but by being clothed upon, *i.e.*, invested at once, without tasting death, with our resurrection body. Yet, though our *main desire* be as above stated, nevertheless we are confident under any circumstances, since, "whilst we are present in the body, we are absent from the Lord" (*v.* 6). Nay, in the prospect of dissolution, we are even "willing rather to be absent from the body (*i.e.*, in the separate state), and to be present with the Lord" (*v.* 8). Wherefore we are also ambitious (φιλοτιμούμεθα) that, whether present or absent, we may be well-pleasing (εὐάρεστοι) to Him," (*v.* 9.)[8]

The above Scripture thus conveys: 1. The chief and special object of aspiration,—life in the resurrection body; 2. A readiness to depart, nay, even a preference of absence from the body, seeing it involves *presence*

glorified body. I see in it a reference to the deniers of the resurrection (1 Cor. xv.), its sense being, *For I do assert again, that we shall in that day prove to be clothed with a body, and not disembodied spirits.—Alford.*

[8] Alford understands 'present or absent' at the time *of Christ's* appearing. (Comp. the foll. ver.)

with the Lord; howbeit our natural feeling is repugnant to being unclothed. Here, then, we have another decisive evidence of the happiness and the place of the disembodied spirit. The life of faith is terminated, and the immediate presence of the Lord is enjoyed, and it only remains for the resurrection to consummate our bliss.

The next passage that is to be cited is Philip. i. 21-24. "For me to live (is) Christ, (*i.e.*, I live only for Him and his work, comp. v. 20,) and to die (is) gain." But if to live in the flesh, this very thing (is) to me the fruit of my work, (*i.e., that in which the fruit of my ministry will be involved,* Alford,) then (lit. *also,*) what I shall choose, I know not. "But I am in a strait betwixt the two, (or, I am held in suspense between the two,) having my desire towards departing, and being with Christ; for it is by far better;[9] but to abide in the

[9] Calvin observes, that this passage refutes the "absurdity of those persons who dream that souls sleep when separated from their bodies: for Paul plainly testifies that we enjoy the presence of Christ when we depart."

flesh is more needful on your account." Here the apostle uses stronger language than in 2 Cor. v. with reference to the superiority of the disembodied state; for it is measured rather by comparison with the ills and disadvantages of the present, than with the perfection of the resurrection life. Release from actual toil and sorrow, and the desire to be with Christ, have doubtless led many besides himself to wish to depart, while other considerations have reconciled them, as in his instance, to a longer sojourn below. With so little to gratify our curiosity about details, yet the above passages are full of comfort, as furnishing decided proofs of the Christian's happiness after death. One other remains to be produced.

1 Thess. iv. 13-18. To *sleep* is a frequent and familiar expression in Scripture, as signifying to die. Believers are spoken of as those who are "fallen asleep in Jesus." (1 Cor. xv. 18.) The Lord said, "Our friend Lazarus sleepeth," (John xi. 11,) &c. &c. This figure, when employed with reference to the departure of the child of God, is linked with *peculiarly* peaceful and tranquillizing asso-

ciations. Viewed with relation to this world, its activities, its toils, its pains, death is to him but a sweet sleep. To the eye of sense he *falls asleep;* it may be like Stephen, in the agonies of a violent death, or like Lazarus, on a pillow smoothed down by the tender hands of affectionate relatives; whilst faith, resting on bright and cheering revelations, can follow the happy spirit to regions of bliss, where Jesus is ready to receive it.[1]

[1] The heathen also spoke of death as sleep; but with what a different association! Witness the beautiful and plaintive lines of Moschus. Idyll. iii.

"The meanest herb we trample in the field,
Or in the garden nurture, when its leaf
At winter's touch is blasted, and its place
Forgotten, soon its vernal bud renews,
And from short slumber wakes to life again.
Man wakes no more! Man, valiant, glorious, wise,
When death once chills him, sinks in sleep profound,
A long, unconscious, never-ending sleep."—GISBORNE.

What a refreshing contrast is presented in the words, "Our friend Lazarus sleepeth; but I go, that I may awake him out of sleep;" and the mournful, despairing lament, in the last lines,

Ὁππότε πρῶτα θάνωμες, ἀνάκοοι ἐν χθονὶ κοίλᾳ
Εὕδομες εὖ μᾶλα μακρὸν ἀτέρμονα νήγρετον ὕπνον.

Job (xiv. 12) says, "Man lieth down, and riseth not:

The Thessalonians appear to have been in some doubt and anxiety respecting the prospects of their departed brethren, whom they perhaps imagined would be excluded from the glories of the kingdom of Christ, at his second advent. The apostle tells them there was no ground for solicitude. He would not have them sorrow, even as the rest who have not hope (*i.e., in the resurrection*). "For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also which sleep, through Jesus will God bring with Him."[2] That is, He will raise them up, and bring them (back to us) with him (*i.e.*, Jesus). (Bloomfield. Ostervald also renders, "*Dieu ramènera par Jésus ceux qui seront morts afin qu' ils soient*

till the heavens be no more, (*i.e. never*, comp. Ps. lxxxix. 36, 37,) they shall not awake, nor be raised out of their sleep." Nothing, however, is here in question about an intermediate state, or the resurrection. The statement simply is, man can never re-appear in *this* state of existence, or spring up as a sprout from a fallen tree. See Barnes's *Comment.*

[2] Alford connects "through Jesus" with "sleep." (So Bengel.) Why are they asleep, and not dead? *By whom* have they been thus privileged? Certainly, "through Jesus;" and this may be the right construction.

avec lui.") He proceeds to say, that those living at the second advent "would not anticipate the dead in being received up into heaven;" that the voice of the Archangel and the trump of God would first awaken the dead in Christ, and then they and the living would be caught up *together*, to meet the Lord in the air. For a brief moment, it might seem, the spectacle will be presented of all the redeemed standing on the earth in glorified bodies, previous to being translated above. It has been already remarked that *the* hope of the faithful is Christ's coming.

It nowhere, perhaps, appears more manifestly than in this passage (see especially *v.* 17). The Thessalonians are exhorted to "comfort one another *with these words;*" in the which, however, beyond the repeated mention of "them which sleep," and once, "the dead in Christ," we have less information than may be gleaned from other texts respecting the place and condition of the departed. So real and effectual is the consolation derived from that "blessed hope," when realized by the soul in freshness and power.

Allusion to separate spirits is found also in Heb. xii. 22. "But ye are come unto Mount Sion, and unto the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to myriads of angels—a general assembly;[8] and to the church of the first-born ones, enrolled in heaven, and to God the Judge of all, and *to the spirits of just men perfected,*" &c. The church of the first-born is so called with relation to the other redeemed ones, converted during the millennial age, after the first resurrection and translation to heaven of the former. The whole context plainly relates to the final or resurrection state; yet *to faith* these things are, so to speak, present. The just are spoken of as *perfected,* which can only be said of them in the consummation of glory and happiness in the resurrection. (Comp. ch. xi. 40.) Their *spirits* are expressly mentioned, because the noblest and undying part of them. "The spirits of the just," we might gather from this place, must be even

[8] This pointing, by which πανηγύρει refers to μυριάσιν ἀγγέλων, is required, as many have shown, by the structure of the whole portion, and is adopted by the best critics. So Chrysostom, Theophyl. and Pesch. Syr.

now in bliss; but when it is said, "The spirits of the *just perfected*," we have them presented to us in a higher than a disembodied state.

The notion (which appears to have been always rather prevalent) that the separate spirit bears a strong resemblance to the person living, seems to derive support from the following passages: Mark vi. 49; Luke xxiv. 37, 39; Rev. vi. 9, 11, xx. 4; 1 Sam. xxviii. 14; Luke xvi. 23.

In conclusion we may observe, that nowhere is the association of *glory* attached to the separate state; but rather that of a tranquil rest, and enjoyment of Christ's presence, with freedom from all sin and sorrow. The departed just, doubtless, await with happy anticipation the period for their being clothed with their heavenly house, and enjoy communion with each other, as well as with the Lord. Whether they have any knowledge of what is going on in the world cannot either be positively affirmed or denied. Heb. xii. 1, cannot bear upon this question; for the persons there mentioned may be called "witnesses," with reference to God and his

truth. Or if there is, according to some, an *agonistic* allusion, and the cloud of witnesses are represented as spectators of the exertions of those whom the apostle is addressing, this can only be imagery, not reality; for those who look on are represented as *compassing us about*, *περικείμενον ἡμῖν νέφος*, as though around us, and not contemplating us from above.

APPENDIX A.

THE notion held by some, of the unconsciousness of the disembodied spirit, seems as little countenanced by sound philosophy as by Scripture. Bishop Butler observes, "As it is evident our *present* powers and capacities of reason, memory, and affection, do not depend upon our gross body, in the manner in which perception by our organs of sense does; so they do not appear to depend upon it at all in any such manner as to give ground to think, that the dissolution of this body will be the destruction of these our *present* powers of reflection, as it will of our powers of sensation; or to give ground to conclude even, *that it* will be so much as a suspension of the

former."[1] Dr. Abercrombie says, "If the being, then, which we call mind or soul, be, to the utmost extent of our knowledge, thus dissimilar to, and distinct from, any thing that we know to be a result of bodily organization, what reason have we to believe that it should be affected by any change in the arrangement of material organs, except in so far as it relates to its intercourse with this external world. The effects of that change, which we call the death of an animal body, are nothing more than a change in the arrangement of its constituent elements; for it can be demonstrated, on the strictest principles of chemistry, that not one particle of these elements ceases to exist. We have, in fact, no conception of annihilation; and our whole experience is opposed to the belief that one atom which ever existed has ceased to exist. There is, therefore, as Dr. Brown has well remarked, in the very decay of the body, an analogy which would seem to indicate the continued existence of the thinking principle, since that which we term decay is itself only another name for continued existence. To conceive, then, that any thing mental ceases to exist after death, when

[1] *Analogy*, part i. ch. 1. The whole chapter, entitled "Of a Future Life," should be read, as bearing upon this subject.

we know that everything corporeal continues to exist, is a gratuitous assumption, contrary to every rule of philosophical inquiry, and in direct opposition, not only to all the facts relating to mind itself, but even to the analogy which is furnished by the dissolution of the bodily frame."[2]

Little, indeed, as we know of the nature of spirits, the idea of their ever being for one instant *unconscious* or *asleep*, seems in the extremest degree improbable. As Butler remarks of *dreams*, "We are at present possessed of a latent, and what would otherwise be an unimagined, unknown power of perceiving sensible objects, in as strong and lively a manner without our external organs of sense, as with them." That the intellectual powers and the affections often remain entirely unimpaired to the very last moment of life, affords a fair presumption that death itself does not interrupt or suspend them. And the experience of drowning persons who have been restored to life tends to the same conclusion. The following remarkable instance, among many on record, is found in the *Autobiography of Sir John Barrow.* The occurrence happened to Admiral Beaufort, in 1825, and is described by him in a letter to

[2] *On the Intellectual Powers*," pp. 27, 28.

Dr. Wollaston. "From the moment all exertions had ceased—which I imagine was the immediate consequence of complete suffocation—a calm feeling of the most perfect tranquillity superseded the previous tumultuous sensations,—it might be called apathy, certainly not resignation, for drowning no longer appeared to be an evil,—I no longer thought of being rescued, nor was I in any bodily pain. On the contrary, my sensations were now of rather a pleasurable cast, partaking of that dull but contented sort of feeling which precedes the sleep produced by fatigue. Though the senses were thus deadened, not so the mind,—*its activity seemed to be invigorated in a ratio which defies all description;* for thought rose after thought with a rapidity of succession that is not only indescribable, but probably inconceivable by any one who has not himself been in a similar situation. The course of those thoughts I can even now, in a great measure, retain—the event which had just taken place—the awkwardness that had produced it—the bustle it must have occasioned (for I had observed two persons jump from the chain)—the effect it would have on a most affectionate father—the manner in which he would disclose it to the rest of the family—and a thousand other

circumstances minutely associated with home, were the first series of reflections that occurred. They took then a wider range—our last cruise—a former voyage and shipwreck—my school—the progress I had made there, and the time I had misspent—and even all my boyish pursuits and adventures. Thus, travelling backwards, every past incident of my life seemed to glance across my recollection in retrograde succession; not, however, in mere outline, as here stated, but the picture filled up with every minute and collateral feature; in short, the whole period of my existence seemed to be placed before me in a kind of panoramic view, and each act of it seemed to be accompanied by a consciousness of right and wrong, or by some reflection on its cause or its consequences; indeed many trifling events which had been long forgotten then crowded into my imagination, and with the character of recent familiarity." The writer of this narrative then speculates on "the almost infinite power of memory with which we may awaken in another world, and be compelled to contemplate our past lives," and observes that the time occupied by this "deluge of ideas," could not have exceeded two minutes from the moment of suffocation.[3]

[3] *Occult Sciences, Encyclop. Metropol.*

APPENDIX B.

1. *On the notions of the early Greeks about a future state.* Moschus, the Syracusan poet, quoted p. 131, lived about B.C. 250. Some, doubtless, there were, who, like Plato, entertained truer and more exalted notions of man's destiny. But the views of the most ancient Greeks on this subject are to be gathered from the Homeric poems. The 'heroic age' (1400—1200 B.C.), the manners and customs of which are there transmitted to us, may be perhaps regarded as corresponding to the period of the Judges in Jewish history. The following is extracted from Professor Blackie's article on the 'Theology of Homer,' in the eighth volume of the *Classical Museum*. "The souls of men exist after death in the subterranean abodes of hades, or the invisible world, but in a dim, shadowy, unsubstantial state, by no means to be looked on with envy by those who behold the sun in the upper regions, and tread with firm foot on the stable earth. A few special favourites of the gods rise above this common fate of the vulgar dead, and partake in heaven, or in the isles of the west, of

a state of substantial beatitude; while, on the other hand, a few atrocious monsters, or men of reckless and impious character, sinning daringly in the face of the gods, are condemned to excruciating woes in Tartarus or Hell. This terrible retribution, however, has no reference to common men, or common crimes, which are punished by the gods in the present life, the only proper theatre of human fates. Among the many remarkable coincidences that a thoughtful observer might point out between the religious condition of the early Greek and that of the Hebrew mind, none is more notable than that which relates to the views entertained by both nations with regard to a future state. In a legislative capacity, of course, Moses had nothing to do with futurity; but it is remarkable, that in many of the psalms, too many to require special quotation, the state of the dead is spoken of precisely in the same dim, comfortless way, that characterizes the language of Homer. The well-known exclamation of Achilles,

Μὴ δή μοι θάνατόν γε παρ᾽ἀνδα, φάιδιμ᾽ Ὀδυσσεῦ, &c.
Od. xi. 488.

when Ulysses, the live visitant of the dead, is endeavouring to console him with regard to what *he* had lost by death, contains a complete reve-

lation of the early Greek ideas with regard to a future existence. Homer was no Plato. A distinct and practical realist, he had no conception of any existence worth having, without a substantial body of flesh and blood. To him the Christian doctrine of the resurrection, so derided by the Stoics and Epicureans of the apostolic days, (*Acta Apost.* xvii. 18,) would have appeared the necessary condition of the immortality which the Gospel preached. I am scarcely inclined to go so far as Nägelsbach, (§ vii.) who says, that the dead in Homer, except when roused to a momentary revival, are to be considered as utterly exenterated of that consciousness which is our real self in this terrene state; but is plain, from the whole of book xi. and the other places where the dead are incidentally mentioned, that their state is so dim and cloudy, feeble and pithless, that for all the purposes which, to the energetic Homeric man, made life valuable, it was little better than absolute annihilation. When 'darkness covers the eyes' of an old Hellenic hero, wounded in the red strife of war, the curtain has fallen on all his glory for ever, and nothing now remains of that substantial organism called man, but as it were, a cloud or a mere dream. If this be Homer's general view of the

state of the dead, we are not to wonder, that he does not delay the punishment of the wicked in a future state, but rather completes their suffering in that state, where they are alone capable of any substantial enjoyment. . . . . Homer has no hell for the mass of men, plainly enough, because he has no heaven. . . . . The gods of Homer are too substantial to waste their wrath on such pithless phantoms as float in his hades."

For the convenience of those who may wish to refer to them, the following additional passages in the Old Testament relative to death and the separate state, are indicated. The associations of believers in the former dispensations were indeed comparatively 'dim and comfortless' on this subject. Still, as they looked forward to resurrection (Job xix. 25-27; Heb. xi. 10, 13-16, &c.), they must have had a great source of comfort not possessed by those who were without a divine revelation. They knew that God was the 'God of the *living*,' (Matt. xxii. 32,) and since they always understood by *life* a corporeal existence, (see Isa. xxxviii. 18, 19; Rev. xx. 4, 'the souls—*lived*,') the inference was plain, that the dead would be raised.

Still it was natural, that until 'life and incor-

ruption' were 'brought to light' through the gospel (2 Tim. i. 10), even the pious should cling to the present life with a fondness that derived no little strength from their imperfect and distant views of another, and their inferior dispensational standing. Notwithstanding, however, that it must be a far more blessed thing to be admitted at once into paradise, than to pass through the 'gates of hades,' we may well doubt whether the repulsive and gloomy associations of the latter, in the minds of Old Test. believers, were not more attibutable to their own subjective views, than to any positive knowledge they possessed of the subject. They seem to have transferred the associations of the dark and silent grave to the mysterious region of separate spirits below. That they found, however, in hades a far superior lot to what they often anticipated, we have good grounds for supposing. (Comp. Job x. 21, 22, with Luke xvi. 22, 25.)

Hades—its depth contrasted with the height of heaven, Job xi. 8; Ps. cxxxix. 8; Isa. xiv. 13-15. *The righteous and the wicked both go there*, Gen. xxxvii. 35; *(first mention of hades in Scripture*, c. v. 'grave,') Ps. xvi. 10, ix. 17, xlix. 15; (*'power of hades,'*) Pro. v. 5, vii. 27; Isa. xiv. 9, 10; comp. also 2 Sam. xii. 23. *Death, a release from*

the troubles of this life, Job iii. 11-23; *a rest,* Dan. xii. 13; *confidence of the righteous in,* Ps. xxiii. 4, xlix. 15, xvii. 15. *The dead, described as dwelling in darkness,* Job x. 21, 22; Ps. lxxxviii. 12, cxliii, 3; Eccl. xi. 8; Lam. iii. 6; *as unable to praise God,* Ps. vi. 5, xxx. 9, lxxxviii. 10, 11, cxv. 17; Isa. xxxviii. 18, 19. *As unacquainted with what passes on the earth,* Job xiv. 21; Eccl. ix. 5, 6. *Region of the dead impenetrable to all but God,* Job xxxviii. 17.

In Matt. xvi. 18, 'the gates of hades' appear to mean, emphatically and in a general sense, the *power of death.* Through Christ's work, the faithful members of his Church are delivered in this life, from fear of death (Heb. ii. 14, 15), in the intermediate state, from going to hades; and in the resurrection their bodies also will share in the results of the victory over death and hades, already given us by God, and apprehended by faith. (1 Cor. xv. 55, 57; John xi. 25, 26.)

A Few Remarks

ON

THE BOOK OF ESTHER.

ON THE BOOK OF ESTHER.

THERE are three kings in Scripture called Ahasuerus. 1. Daniel ix. 1, who is probably Astyages; 2. Ezra iv. 6, probably Cambyses; 3. The Ahasuerus of the book of Esther, who is considered by many to be Xerxes. In the cuneiform writing the name is written Khshyarshâ, or Khshwershê, which is taken to be equivalent to the Persian *Shir Shâh, i.e., Lion-King;* for which the Greeks wrote Xerxes, and the Hebrews, prefixing a vowel, made it *Akhashwerosh,* which is softened to the English Ahasuerus. (See Gesen. *Lex.* s. v.) The book of Esther comes in chronologically between the 6th and 7th chapters of Ezra. The succession of kings is: Darius, chapter vi.; Xerxes, not mentioned; and Artaxerxes

Longimanus, chapter vii. The Jews hold this book in veneration next to the books of Moses. The most probable explanation of the singular fact, that no allusion to the name of God is found in it is, that it is a compilation from the chronicles of the Persian Kings. The authorship is generally assigned to Mordecai. Interesting researches have recently been made in Shushan (Susa) by Mr. Loftus, who speaks of the rich vegetation which clothes the plains after the rains, interspersed with numerous plants of a sweet-scented and delicate iris. He remarks in a note, "By some persons it is supposed that the abundance of this beautiful flower gave the name of Shushan—the lily—to this locality." There is reason to believe, that Mr. Loftus has discovered the remains of the identical edifice referred to in Esther i. 5, 6;—a great hall with 36 columns, the bases of most of which have been found. Upon four of these are inscriptions, which record that Artaxerxes (Mnemon) completed the edifice, which had been commenced by Darius, the son of Hystaspes, whose son Xerxes is also mentioned. Likewise, on some alabaster vases dug up,

has been read the inscription, "Xerxes, the great king."

To two women only, Ruth and Esther, has the honour been conceded of having books of Scripture inscribed with their names. The former of these is important for the genealogy of our Lord; and the latter for the remarkable providence it records, whereby the race was preserved of which He was to be born. This book is indeed eminently illustrative of Divine Providence, and, therefore, deeply interesting and comforting to the believer, and calculated to strengthen his faith. It is also an encouragement to the lowly, and a warning to the proud; a sort of inspired commentary, in fact, on such Scriptures as the Songs of Hannah and of Mary. (1 Sam. ii.; Luke i.)

But besides the profit of a literal and historical view of the book, there appears ground for regarding the leading persons in it as typical characters. Though not grouped together in the narrative in the exact order of sequence, there is yet as much unity and consistency as we can look for in historical types, which are seldom very sharply defined.

To those, then, who have paid attention to prophecy, and who hold the truths of the pre-millennial advent of the Lord, and a personal Antichrist, it is submitted whether there be not a typical sketch in this history, which may be briefly given as follows:— Ahasuerus may represent the Lord. Vashti, the Jewish Church, set aside for pride and disobedience. (Comp. Matthew xxi. 33-43; Romans xi.) Esther, the Christian Church, subsequently called out; in which, too, the features of Esther's character are found, viz., orphan condition, prudence, humility, zeal, devotedness. Haman may be a type of the future Antichrist; and Mordecai and his people of the remnant of Israel, which will be brought through the tribulation of the last days into the blessings of the next, or millennial dispensation. (See Isaiah vi. 13, x. 20-22, xxv.-xxviii. lxiv. lxv. 8-10; Jer. xxxi.; Joel ii. 32; Mic. iv. 7; Zeph. iii. 12, 13; Zech. xii. xiii.; Mal. iii. 3-5, iv. 2, 3; Rev. vii. 1-8; and other passages.

THE ROYAL FEAST.

CH. i. 1-9.

WE may recognize in this a picture of the millennial joy of the earth under the reign of Christ, set forth as the great Ahasuerus, or *Lion-King*. (Comp. Rev. v. 5, x. 3; 1 Kings x. 19, 20.) The figure of a great feast is employed, with reference to the same period, by Isa. xxv. 6, &c. (Comp. Matt. xxii. 1-14.) Every verse is suggestive of some millennial feature. Ver. 1. The vast extent of the empire. (Comp. Ps. lxxii. 8.) Ver. 2. A time of peace, when the king sat undisturbed on his throne, and the princes could leave the most distant provinces to attend his court at Shushan, which means *the city of lilies*. Ver. 3. The princes, nobles, and servants may represent angels, glorified saints, and Israel, who will all administer with and under Christ, when he shall reign in glory over the earth in the age to come. (John i. 51; Heb. ii. 5; Luke xix. 17, 19; Rev. ii. 26; Ps. xlv. 16.) Ver. 4. Such a display of the majesty of Christ will then be afforded. (Isa. xxxiii.

17, xxiv. 23.) All will see "the king in his beauty," and that "many days." Ver. 5. Here we may be reminded of Jerusalem, which will then be the most favoured place in the earth. (Ezek. xlviii. 35; Ps. xlviii.; Jer. iii. 17; Zech. ii. 12, viii.) The "palace" may here, perhaps, be understood to include the city adjoining; and so ii. 5, ix. 6, 11, 12. Ver. 6. The word rendered "green," in our common version, seems rather to mean a sort of fine white linen. The colours and description of the stones of the pavement are uncertain. (See marg.) We may observe that this pavement, however beautiful, is yet *earthly;* it is not like the *gold* pavement of the *heavenly* city. (Rev. xxi. 21.) The same colours in the curtains, &c., here mentioned, are found in Mordecai's dress of honour (ch. viii. 15), which is called "royal apparel." These coloured hangings, therefore, may indicate the display of the royalty of Christ; and beneath this, as beneath a beautiful canopy, millennial Israel will rejoice. Ver. 7. The "wine of the kingdom" may remind us of Matt. xxvi. 29. It is the symbol of the joy (Ps. civ. 15) which will be shared in the

new age by Christ with his people; with his glorified saints in a greater degree and more perfect manner; but yet enjoyed in measure also by the earthly family. The golden vessels which held the wine were of different shapes and sizes, as though typical of the variety, both in measure and mode, with which individuals will partake of the common joy. Ver. 8. Each will be *satisfied*, though some will have a capacity for more, and some for less. Though in all essential respects equal and alike, even the redeemed in heaven will probably be endowed with varied capabilities of enjoyment—capabilities, nevertheless, which in every case may perhaps be eternally developed. The true politeness, and refined hospitality, which at the banquet of Ahasuerus left freedom to the guests, and compelled none to drink more than they liked,* suggests a certain parallel

* The opposite practice of the Athenians is well known. A person was obliged either to drink his portion or leave the company. Their law was, Ἢ πιθι ἢ ἀπιθι, *aut bibe, aut abi*, "Drink, or away." Something in the spirit of this old drinking law is seen when Christians would force some favourite views, or denominational peculiarities, on their brethren.

with the circumstances of that happy time which we are supposing to be foreshadowed by this grand eastern entertainment. For persons will then surely feel "at home," though surrounded with so much glory and magnificence. There will be no constraint; nothing forced or formal. A happy freedom and ease will be realized by the Lord's guests, not less than by those of the King of Persia.

As in the Apocalypse, the visions of ultimate glory are first presented, and then details of preceding events; and as often in the structure of the Psalms, what is later in time is first in order of narration; so in the above verses, we have a foreshadowing of the kingdom of Christ, and in what follows, of antecedent transactions; the first being the rejection of Israel under the figure of the disobedience and disgrace of the Queen Vashti.

THE QUEEN'S DOWNFALL.

CH. i. 10-22.

ISRAEL was espoused unto the Lord (Jer. ii. 2; Ezek. xvi. 8), and for a little season, in the brilliant reign of Solomon, a slight foretaste of millennial glory and felicity was afforded. (1 Kings iv. 25; Ps. lxxii.) The temple was designed as an house of prayer for all people; the Gentile stranger was not forgotten in Solomon's prayer at its dedication, who contemplated as one of its glorious results connected with it, that *all people of the earth* might know the Lord's name, and fear Him like Israel. (1 Kings viii. 41-43.) The glory of the Lord, in so far as then revealed, was manifested in connection with his *earthly* bride, whose beauty was perfect through his own comeliness which he had put upon her (Ezek. xvi. 14); and who seems to be represented by Vashti (*i.e., beauty,* or *the beautiful one*), who also made a great feast in the king's royal house. We need not here discuss the propriety of the queen's refusal

to come unveiled before the assembled people and princes. The type, however, points to the pride and disobedience of Israel. It is owing to their sin that universal blessing has been retarded to this day. The hope of it, which might have been entertained in the early part of Solomon's reign, vanished before its close. Still later, the apostle Peter's exhortation to Israel to repent and be converted, that their sins might be blotted out, that the *times of refreshing* might come from the presence of the Lord, and the *times of restitution of all things* arrive, was not responded to by them. Shiloh must be owned by Israel before there can be the obedience of the peoples (Gen. xlix. 10) to him. The cutting asunder of the staff Beauty has been followed by the breaking of the covenant made with all the peoples. (Zech. xi. 10.) The glories peculiar to the Jews could not profit themselves even, much less become means of blessing to others, when they ceased to be held in subservience to the Giver (Jer. vii. 4); even as the beauty of Vashti saved her not from ruin when she refused to comply with the royal mandate. And as the

feast of Ahasuerus ended on the seventh day in disappointment, for that he could not present his beautiful queen for his people's admiration, so with all the readiness of God to bring in blessing, the introduction of general and permanent felicity during the *seven days*, or earthly course of things, is proved hopeless, and can only be looked for when the earth shall begin to come under the power of the *eighth* day, or resurrection period.

The wise counsellors of Ahasuerus were sensibly alive to the probable evils that would result from Vashti's disobedience, if left unpunished. They regarded her conduct as nearly affecting every man in the empire (ver. 16). Men are apt to be very sensitive to the evil and results of insubordination in their own relationships and systems; yet how indifferent they are to its heinousness where it has reference to *God!* How great, nevertheless, must be the sin of disobeying *Him*, or of using, as many do, his gifts and blessings in proud independence of the Giver! To have left this unnoticed, when manifested either amongst angels or men, would have been inconsistent, not only

with the Divine holiness itself, but with the maintenance of order among all the hosts of heaven. We shall know more hereafter of the bearings of the creation of man, of his fall, and of redemption, on the whole economy of the universe, and on the angels. (Job xxxviii. 7; 1 Cor. iv. 9; 1 Peter i. 12; Eph. iii. 10.) The latter, who know 'times,' 'law,' and 'judgment' (Esther i. 13) better than we do, delight in obedience (Ps. ciii. 20); and the higher their dignity (Rev. viii. 2; comp. Esth. i. 14), the more must they appreciate the holiness of God, and witness with abhorrence the transgression of men against his law, immutable by reason of its essential and divine perfection,—unlike that of the Medes and Persians, no part of which could be altered (Esth. i. 19; viii. 8; Dan. vi. 8, 12, 15, 17), however capricious, mischievous, or wicked, and such as would have been more honoured in the breach than the observance.

The advice of the counsellors, that Vashti should be deposed, and banished from the king's presence, was followed; and thus dis*graced,* she represents Israel put away from

her husband (Isa. l. 1; Jer. iii. 8), and despoiled of her leading place among the nations. The type, however, fails to exhibit the whole truth in regard to the ultimate dealings of the Lord with Israel. Vashti was never restored to the place from which she fell, although Ahasuerus seems afterwards to have regretted her fate (ii. 1); but the gifts and calling of God are without repentance, *i.e.*, *unchangeable*. (Rom. xi. 29.) The 'woman forsaken,' and the 'wife of youth' who has been refused, will again be restored to favour. (Isa. liv. 5, 6.) Meanwhile, however, the *heavenly* bride is being prepared, and this is typified in the *chosen maiden* who became supreme in the affections of the monarch, and to whom he gave the royal crown.

THE CHOSEN MAIDEN.

CH. ii.

ESTHER means *star* in Persian, and seems to have been the new name given to Hadassah when chosen queen. Her Jewish name signifies *myrtle*. The former is suggestive of

the heavenly characteristics, and resurrection glory of the Church (Dan. viii. 10, xii. 3; Rev. ii. 28; xii. 4), the latter of her association with the millennial earth. The myrtle was used in the booths at the feast of Tabernacles (Neh. viii. 15), the solemnity which sets forth the joy of the promised rest. In that happy age it will grow in the wilderness (Isa. xli. 19), and take the place of the briar, or memorial of the curse. (Isa. lv. 13.) Zechariah mentions it in a vision of returning mercies to Jerusalem. (Zech. i. 8, 10, 11.) In these two names, the one Jewish, and the other Gentile, we may see indicated the twofold origin of the Church; while their significancy may remind us that, raised to unearthly glory, that privileged body will also, as the Bride of the Lamb, minister to the joy and happiness of the renovated creation, of which she will be the most distinguished ornament. The orphan* state of Esther may remind us of the lowly, helpless condition from which grace has raised the Church, which is in-

* Abihail, the name of her deceased father (ver. 15), means *father of strength.* When all natural strength *failed, God* took us up in grace. (Rom. v. 6; Zech. iv. 6.)

debted, not to any carnal descent, but to electing love for her pre-eminence. The oil of myrrh and sweet odours (ver. 12) for purification, represent the graces of the Spirit which are found in the Church, and developed progressively during her earthly state, till she shall have made herself ready (Rev. xix. 7) for the marriage of the Lamb (Cant. iii. 6, iv. 13, 14, 16), and be presented to Him. (Eph. v. 27; comp. 2 Cor. xi. 2.) 'Purification' seems to mean here the embellishment which is the result of the continued use of the precious ointments and cosmetics, rather than the removal of uncleanness.

Esther's moderation, and freedom from covetousness, and the desire for rich apparel, and such things as most women in her place might have asked for (vers. 13-15), offers another characteristic of the Church. Rich in her heavenly portion, she needs not the treasures of earth, and her native beauty will be set off by the ornaments her Lord will give her (Cant. i. 10, 11), not by human decorations. With verse 17 we may compare Cant. vi. 8, 9.

In ver. 18, another view of the millennial

age is presented in "Esther's feast;" a feast which was unaccompanied by the painful circumstances of the former one, and which surpassed it in joy; for royal gifts were distributed, and a release made to the provinces, or remission of imposts and tribute. In this we may see indicated what the sabbatical year, or "year of release" (Lev. xxv.; Deut. xv.) also pointed to, viz., the deliverance of the creation from the bondage of corruption. (Romans viii. 21; see also Isaiah xxv. 6, 7.) Mordecai's obtaining an office in the court of the king (ver. 19) represents Israel's honour at that time, *i.e.*, the remnant of the nation taken into the Divine favour. This is more fully brought out in the sequel; before which a type of Antichrist is presented in Haman.

Probably, to prevent feelings of jealousy on the part of the nobles and people of Persia, and dangers which might follow, Mordecai had charged Esther to conceal her extraction (ver. 10), and she faithfully kept the secret. This daughter of Israel well rewarded the pious pains and careful education that had evidently been bestowed upon her; and she affords a beautiful example to the young, in

continuing to obey her guardian, even when she was married and a queen (ver. 20). We are now being educated for heaven, and the results of present habits of obedience will doubtless be felt beyond the present life. Graces, imperfectly at best, developed on earth, will be matured in heaven. We shall be the more fitted to reign as kings then, by having learned to obey now. The orphan and adopted child disappeared not in the queen. Humility, the grateful remembrance of the past grace of Christ—in a word, all the fruits of the Spirit's teaching now will appear in the adopted children of God, when the time shall arrive for a brighter than the Persian diadem to be placed on their brows.

The great service rendered by Mordecai (vers. 21-23), though recorded in the royal annals, passed for the time being unrewarded. How blessed to know that the least of our poor services is registered and remembered in heaven, and will be richly recompensed hereafter (Matt. xxv. 35, 36), to say nothing of any present reward that may, and does often follow them. But Mordecai's deed came to remembrance afterwards, and at a time

when it led to the most important results. This little book is singularly rich in the illustration of Divine Providence, and, though his *Nąme* is not in it, it shows the *hand* of God in every detail; his wisdom in allotting to every event its time and season; in causing one incident to grow out of another; and in making man (as so often) the unconscious instrument of carrying out his own determinate counsel. (Isaiah xlvi. 10.) Nothing in the universe, however trifling, is left to chance. (Matt. x. 29, 30.)

THE GREEN-BAY TREE.

Ps. xxxvii. 35.

AGAG seems to have been a name common to the kings of the Amalekites, and Haman to have been, therefore, a descendant of the royal family. As a Jew, Mordecai could not pay reverence to one of that doomed and accursed race (Exod. xvii. 14, 16; Deut. xxv. 19), and he thus represents the remnant of Israel, who will testify against Antichrist, *and* be the objects of his hatred and per-

secution; whom he would altogether destroy, except that they will be protected by the special providence of God. (Rev. vii. 3-8.) Haman's absolute power (iii. 1, 10, 12), his wicked and crafty device (iii. 8, 9; compare Dan. viii. 23-25), his wrath at Mordecai's refusal to do him reverence (comp. Rev. xiii. 12, 15), and his sudden fall and destruction when in the height of his power and pride, make him a striking type of the great Antichrist.*

God so ordained that the lot which was cast in order to ascertain what time would be most auspicious for giving effect to Haman's wicked purpose, fell to a period a twelvemonth distant (iii. 7; comp. Prov. xvi. 33). On what follows, it may be observed: 1. That the enemies of the Lord's people have commonly misrepresented them, in order to raise persecution against them. Thus Haman

* Each of the three Gentile empires has produced a type of Antichrist. Babylon gives us Nebuchadnezzar (Dan. iii.); Persia, Haman; Greece, Antiochus Epiphanes. (1 Macc. chap. i., &c.) Antichrist himself will rise out of one of the divisions of Alexander's empire (Dan. viii. 23, &c.); and become the head of the fourth, or Roman empire. (Dan. vii. 8; Rev. xiii. xvii.)

accused the Jews of disobeying the king's laws (iii. 8). Thus, too, our blessed Lord (Luke xxiii. 2) and his apostles (Acts xvi. 20, 21, xvii. 7) were falsely charged. And so also in our own day, ecclesiastical authorities have stirred up the secular powers against humble disciples and quiet subjects, by making them appear to be political offenders. 2. Mordecai felt assured that deliverance would come by *some* means or other; for the extermination of the seed of Israel was irreconcilable with God's calling and promises (iv. 14). 3. The law which rendered any one liable to death who should approach the Persian king uncalled (iv. 11) reminds us, by contrast, of our happy privilege to draw near with boldness to the throne of grace. (Heb. iv. 16.) Esther herself approached the king with fear; but the weakest saint may at all times enter the presence of the King of Heaven with humble confidence. *His* golden sceptre is ever extended to us in love. 4. When the capricious monarch (influenced, however, doubtless, by the Lord, Prov. xxi. 1), had promised Esther any thing she might request, she wisely refrained from declaring her real

object, till she had again and again made proof of his sincerity and earnestness.

Many a good work has been frustrated by precipitation. But Esther felt her way with the wisdom of the serpent; at once guarding against a repulse by confirming her influence with the king, and precluding any suspicions on the part of Haman by the marked honour which she seemed to put upon him. Thus were the horns of the unconscious victim gilded, and his neck adorned with garlands. (Ps. xcii. 7, lxxiii. 18-20, xxxvii. 35, 36.)

5. Man carries within himself the springs of contentment or of uneasiness. Solomon made experiment of all earthly delights, and found them vanity and vexation of spirit. Ahab's happiness was spoiled because he could not add a little vineyard to his royal possessions. (1 Kings xxi. 4.) Jonah, indifferent to the threatened destruction of Nineveh, was angry unto death for the privation of the gourd that had occasioned him such excessive joy. And so the hatred of Haman towards Mordecai made all his greatness and privileges appear to him as nothing, till he could effect the destruction

of the refractory Jew (v. 13). 6. God oft allows his servants to come into extremiti before he delivers them. But '*in the mou of the Lord it shall be seen*' (or, *provided* (Gen. xxii. 14.) The circumstances, *i.e.*, a parently hopeless and desperate, their delive ance is effected. The gallows were alread prepared to hang Mordecai, and Hamar eagerness led him, while it was yet nigh into the outer court of the palace, in ord that he might seize upon the earliest oppo tunity of obtaining from the king the lea for his execution. Though in ignorance his danger, there was but a step betwee Mordecai and death. Yet how easily, and the same time remarkably, the Lord mad 'the way to escape.' (1 Cor. x. 13.) The itself trivial circumstance of the king's slee lessness; his hearing read out of the boo of records, Mordecai's former service; th nature of the reward, which at once exalte the faithful servant, and humiliated in th deepest manner his bitter enemy; all th illustrates the exquisite tact of Divine Prov dence, and fills us with thankfulness th *our times* are in his hand. (Ps. xxxi. 15.)

BEAUTY FOR ASHES.

Isa. lxi. 3.

PROBABLY even the strange vicissitudes of eastern courts have scarcely exhibited so remarkable a chain of events as is presented in this narrative: "If God be for us, who can be against us?" (Rom. viii. 31.) Balaam would curse, but the curse is each time turned into a blessing. (Comp. 2 Sam. xvi. 12; Rom. viii. 28.) 7. Some acquaintance with the Lord's past repeated interpositions on behalf of the Jews may account for the prediction of Haman's wife and his wise men (vi. 13). 8. When the Lord judges the wicked, his blows often follow each other with terrible rapidity. What had now occurred was favourable for the disclosure which Esther (who so well knew how to keep a secret when necessary) was resolved no longer to delay. Haman goes home from his public humiliation only to hear the gloomy forebodings of his family circle, and these are interrupted by the messengers who summon

him to his last banquet. There, in a scene of splendour and hilarity, ill according with his troubled spirit, from a quarter of which he had not the slightest suspicion, the discovery of his wickedness is made with the suddenness of a thunder-clap, and the guest of Esther and Ahasuerus is exposed as the conspirer against the interests of his sovereign, the existence of a whole race of his subjects, and the life of his favourite queen. The scene, one of tragic and thrilling interest, speedily concludes. A few moments, during which the king, who had arisen under the influence of unutterable surprise and indignation, was walking in the palace garden, were employed by the terrified criminal to make unavailing request for his life to the queen. In the earnestness of supplication, and the agony of fear, he had fallen on the couch on which she reclined. As though misinterpreting this gesture, the king, who at that moment returned, broke his silence with a few words of bitter sarcasm. The attendants well understood their meaning. They immediately covered Haman's face, as one *unworthy* to look upon the king, and doomed

to die. But one revelation more was wanting to complete his infamy, and it determined also the mode of his death. Harbonah mentions his design against Mordecai; and this wicked man—singular instance of the discriminating and precise retribution of God—dies in the very place, and by the very means he had the day before prepared for the destruction of the Jew. (See Job xviii.; Prov. xi. 2-11.)

We may trace the type yet more in detail. Esther (the risen Church) begins to exercise official power (viii. 1, 2, ix. 29, 32), and her relation to Mordecai (the saved and converted remnant) becomes known. The redeemed, whether in heaven or earth, will belong to and be recognized as the same family. Mordecai receives the king's ring; and, acting with and under Esther, who intercedes on behalf of her people, provides, by another royal decree, for the frustration of the device against them. The Church will indeed be the risen priests of Israel (see Rev. v. 8), and, like Aaron's sons with their father, will minister with Christ on their behalf. Mordecai is exalted to a kind of royal estate

(viii. 15); and the joy, honour, and feast which his nation had (vers. 16, 17), represent the blessing of the remnant in the land, and of the whole nation, after the coming of the Lord, and the destruction of their great oppressor. (Isa. lx., lxi., lxii., xxx. 27-33, xiv., x., xi., xii.) The beautiful psalms, called songs of degrees (cxx.-xxxiv.), may be read in connection with this. They seem to relate to the Jews of the dispersion, when returning to their land after the coming of Christ. "Many of the people of the land became Jews" (viii. 17, comp. ix. 3). And so after the restoration and exaltation of Israel, the nations, from motives either of love or fear, will submit themselves, and multitudes of converts be made to the true faith. (Isa. ii., lxvi. 19, xiv. 1; Ps. xviii. 44; Zech. viii 22, 23.) The Jews disdained to avail themselves of the permission to take the spoil of their enemies (viii., ii., ix. 10, 15, 16); but this finds no correspondency in the future. (See Zech. xiv. 14.) As the book commenced, so it also closes with a foreshadowing of the millennium. This is given in the wide sway of Ahasuerus (Christ the king), comp. Ps.

lxxii., and the welfare and peace of Israel, who will become chief in the earth, as Mordecai was second only to the king. (ch. x.)

The book of Esther embraces a period of ten years, which are thus distributed:

Accession of Xerxes	B.C.	485
Banquet in which Vasti is divorced	„	483*
Esther's marriage	„	479†
Haman's device and death	„	474
Deliverance of the Jews	„	473
Xerxes killed by Artabanus	„	465

The series of the historical books of the Old Testament is aptly closed with Esther; as though an intimation of the continued preservation of the Jews, till finally delivered from all their enemies, and established in millennial blessing.

The feast of Purim, still observed with great rejoicings by the Jews, is the last feast in their ecclesiastical year. The next is the Passover, at about a month's interval. The mercy of the Lord will save them from their last great oppressor, in order to lead them to faith in Jesus, and all the inestimable

* Xerxes invades Greece, B.C. 480.

† Battles of Platæa and Mycale this year.

blessings which result from the saving knowledge of "Christ our passover." (1 Cor. v. 7.) When Israel shall be able to discern aright the symbolic meaning of their festal seasons, they will not only appreciate the *mercy* which will mark, as it were, the close of the old long year of their unbelief and dispersion with a feast of Purim, but they will adore the *grace* by which the new year will find them keeping the redemption feast (1 Cor. v. 8) in their land, as believers in the Lamb of God.

BIBLICAL STUDIES.

THE RED HEIFER.

Num. xix.

THE atonement of Christ is presented in a threefold aspect:—1. In the *passover*, as meeting the *wrath* of God. 2. In the *day of atonement*, as meeting *transgressions*. 3. In the ordinance of the *red heifer*, as meeting *uncleanness*.

The provision of Num. xix. is interpreted, in Heb. ix. 13, as fulfilled in the one complete sacrifice of Christ. For *us* there is no need of *many* sprinklings. Nevertheless, the power of Christ's one offering is perpetual; and we have to recur to its unceasing virtue, designed for continuous use, and thus keep our once purged consciences practically clean from the defilement that is within, and the pollution we are liable to contract in the world. Thus it is said, "The blood of Jesus Christ *cleanseth* us from all sin." (1 John i. 7.)

The full and distinct recognition of *sin* in our *nature* does not appear in the legal types. Indeed this could not then have been made manifest consistently with the basis on which God was acting towards Israel, and with his purpose in giving the law. Man could not have been dealt with and tested on the principle of *law*, without reserving for a later period the disclosure of his inbred sin. Yet it is just by reason of that sin within us, that we are exposed to defilements from without, such as are signified in this chapter. *Jesus*, who was perfectly pure, abode as a man in the world, without any taint coming upon him. With the *light of the New Testament*, then, we may perceive original sin *implied*, though not declared, in this chapter. The various cases of contemplated uncleanness—the different modes and degrees of contact with death, convey the notion of *sin* rather than of *sins;* the latter enter more especially into the instruction of Lev. xvi.

Ver. 2. A *heifer* may convey the idea of weakness and passiveness. It contrasts with the power and strength of the bullock. (Lev. i.) *The type* of this chapter being a sin-offering

of the deepest and most thorough character, the heifer appears suited to present the aspect of passive endurance and suffering without resistance ("crucified through weakness"). It was "red," to denote especially its sacrificial, victim character, like the rams' skins. (Ex. xxv. 5.)

Ver. 3. Aaron could not have engaged in this without being disqualified for the day for his functions, by the necessary uncleanness involved (ver. 7). Eleazar was, therefore, to officiate in this ordinance. Perhaps, then, nothing special, as to the bearing of the type, depends on this particular; yet, as the meaning of Eleazar is, "to whom God is help," it may suggest that wonderful combination of Divine power with weakness which was seen in Him who was at once the Priest and the Sacrifice. (Acts x. 38; Heb. ix. 14; Isa. l. 6, 7.)

Ver. 4. We may, perhaps, refer this to Heb. x. 20; for the new and living way is into the *holy places*, not the most holy alone. (See Heb. x. 19.) Blood sprinkled *directly before* the tabernacle indicates the consecration of the way for us.

Ver. 5. *Every* part of the animal was burned in this unique offering, even the *blood.*

Ver. 6. These things seem to have been thrown in, as it were, to complete the view of Christ's human nature. Weak as He appeared, and his countenance marred, yet real human dignity and loftiness were in Him. The cedar and scarlet gave a character, or *taste,* so to speak, to the burning; and with the hyssop, emblematical of lowliness, remind us of the marvellous assemblage of excellencies which were combined in Him who suffered without the camp, consumed by the fire of God's holiness, to take away our sin.

Ver. 7. It is remarkable, that every person who had anything to do with the heifer, its ashes, or the water of purification, contracted defilement, excepting the individual who was to be cleansed. Christ is a blessing to the *sinner*—to him who has iniquity to be removed; but if we come to Him in our natural state, as having already a cleanness of our own, the very reverse of blessing will be the result. The sacrifice of Christ is *ruinous* to *all who* are not interested in it. We can only

safely use it in one way—as feeling our need, and as consciously defiled. (See also verses 8, 10, 21.) Although the priest had but sprinkled the blood, and only stood by the burning, yet he was to be "unclean until the even:" the very sight and proximity of the offering defiled, such was the intense character of sin which was stamped upon it. The "even" was the commencement of a new day.

Ver. 9. Lit. *water of impurity, i.e.* to cleanse from impurity. "It is a purification for sin;" lit. *it is a sin-offering.*

Ver. 10. The congregation of Israel being typical of the Church now, the "stranger" here, and in the passover, must refer to Gentiles in the millennium. There is nothing that properly answers to this at present.

Ver. 11. *Man* was the source and means of all the evil, corruption, and death which is in the world. (Rom. v.) The touch of the carcase of an animal made the person unclean only during that day (Lev. xi.); but the uncleanness from any sort of contact with the dead body, or remains of a man, extended over seven days. The taint of sin

and death thus covers the whole period of nature—the *seven* days, or complete course of the old creation.

Ver. 12. The "third day" alludes to resurrection. Without the resurrection of Christ, we could not know anything of the right use and application of his death. Purification with the ashes on the *third* day connects these things together. It is said, "He shall *purify himself*," though we find another person sprinkled the water (vers. 18, 19). Thus, while it is true that our cleanness is entirely Christ's work, yet it is the sinner's own faith which appropriates the blessing.

Ver. 13. "Cut off;" typical of eternal death.

Ver. 14. The "tent" is emblematical of the circumstances of our common daily life in the world; in the midst of which we are continually liable to defilement.

Ver. 15. A vessel *closely covered* was not considered unclean. If anyone were actually impervious to the action of external polluting influences (as Jesus was), he would really prove himself thereby to be clean.

Ver. 16. "Slain with a sword," &c. The

different kinds of contact with death in man, in this verse, may, perhaps, illustrate various ways in which sin and defilement are contracted. 1. One may be identified, or have sympathy with, the *violence* that is in the world. The account of a battle, or the history of a conqueror, &c., may awaken emotions which, however natural, are really defiling. 2. The "bone of a man,"—some *relic* of sin; as, for instance, a bad or hurtful book, an evil action, pursuit, &c., may pollute a person who is occupied with it. 3. A "grave" is something much more hateful; it is the very place of death. We may liken it to the more glaring kinds of evil and folly in the world; its vain and sinful amusements, &c.

Ver. 17. "Running (or living) water," is typical of *life*. Being put to the ashes, may teach, that by the death of Christ *life* is obtained, as well as *atonement* and *purification*.

DEUTERONOMY XXI. 1-9.

MEN often call that *misfortune* which God calls *sin;* and they find it difficult to attach culpability to *unconscious* transgression. Yet such is characterized in Lev. v. 17, by the three-fold designation of *sin, guilt,* and *iniquity;* and can only be met by *atonement.* (See also Ps. xix. 12.) A sin of ignorance is still a sin. But besides our actual *sins,* we both inherit the *sinful nature* of Adam (Ps. li. 5), and are born under the imputation of his *guilt;* and, therefore, under a sentence of death. (Rom. v. 12, 15, &c.) The former of these facts is, as we have noticed in treating on Num. xix., *implied* in that chapter: the latter seems hinted at in the ordinance now before us.

Few ceremonies in Israel were more solemn and picturesque than this one. The body of the slain person is accidentally found,—the *murderer* or homicide cannot be discovered,—

the city nearest to the corpse is ascertained by the careful measurements of the elders and judges, and is held definitely, though not exclusively responsible (see ver. 8, 9,) for the blood. A heifer, beautiful and expressive type of the great victim (see on Num. xix.) is next brought forth. In cases of transgression, the victim for expiation, though always spotless, might have been used in labour. *Here*, however, and in Num. xix., the animal must never have been put to any work whatever; a feature which, in both places, seems to point to the fact of our Lord's freedom from what all others have inherited from Adam in the way of sin and guilt; and his consequent fitness to deliver others from these things.

The heifer was brought into a rough and sterile valley, washed, as the original seems to say, by a perennial torrent. In this dreary place, in presence of the priestly company standing there for the Lord, and who were the constant medium both of his blessing and judgment (Deut. xvii. 8-10), the heifer's neck was struck off. These particulars are eminently suggestive. Nature, at man's fall,

responded to his degraded condition, and put on robes of mourning. (Gen. iii. 17-19; Rom. viii. 20-22.) Mere natural perceptions can recognize something of the desolation and misery, but they cannot estimate the cause in the deep injury done to the holiness of God. The eye that is educated in the sanctuary, the spiritual senses which are conversant with the ways of God's house are alone competent to judge of this. Whilst believers, however, have a *priestly* judgment, as far as it goes, both of sin and its remedy, Jesus alone, the Great Priest, perfectly judges both of the one and other. (Heb. ii. 17.) Human philanthropy and science are more intent on the improvement of a ruined world, than they are disposed to appreciate the solemn facts associated with its past fall, and future happy destiny. It is like seeking to fertilize the rough bed of the torrent, whilst ignoring the corpse of the murdered man. Divine justice, however, demanded satisfaction; and thus the heifer dies a death which is peculiarly significative of the terrible fierceness of wrath which expended itself on the blessed antitype.

Over the bleeding body of the animal the elders next washed their hands,[1] probably with the running water of the torrent. *Purification,* as well as *atonement,* is found in Christ, who came by *water* and *blood.* (1 John v. 6; John xix. 34.) Through Him we have not only forgiveness of sins, but a *new nature.* (Titus iii. 5; Heb. x. 22.) The elders also repeat (perhaps after the priests) a form of words declarative of their innocence of the murder, and supplicatory of the Lord's forgiveness for his people; which is then granted. Besides the above *world-wide* aspect of this typical scene, there is also in it an evident adumbration of the guilt of the Jewish nation in the murder of the Lord Jesus, and of their future national forgiveness (Zech. xii. 10-14, xiii. 1), by virtue of the very blood which they shed in their ignorance. (Acts iii. 17; Luke xxiii. 34.) If generally, the whole world is responsible for the blood of Jesus (Acts iv. 25-27, xvii. 31), specially so is the Jewish nation, and pre-eminently Jerusalem,

[1] Pilate is supposed by some to have alluded to this ordinance in his symbolic action. (Matt. xxvii. 24.)

which is the "city next unto the slain man;"[2] while the "rough valley, which is neither eared (ploughed) nor sown," corresponds to the fallen condition of the land of Israel since the "days of vengeance" set in. (Luke xxi. 22-24; Matt. xxiii. 38.) It is true that we find in such Scriptures as Zech. xii., Ps. li., Isa. liii., the future experience of the saved remnant of Israel when fully aware of their responsibility and guilt, which may appear at variance with verses 6-8 of this chapter. But this is because the very nature and scope of this ordinance exclude any such conviction and remorse. This type, no more than any other, could embody *all* the truth. It simply brings out one phase of it—the ignorance and unconsciousness that characterized the sin of Israel (Acts iii. 13-17), great as that sin nevertheless was.

[2] Christians will do well to remember this moral aspect of Jerusalem in the sight of God, when it comes by-and-bye to regain a political and religious importance in the eyes of men. See that fearfully strong passage, Rev. xi. 8.

MARK IX. 38-50.

Ver. 38. John (influenced apparently by what had just occurred, *v.* 37) seems to be somewhat doubtful now whether they had acted rightly in doing as he describes (verse 39). Jesus tells him they were in the wrong, and (ver. 40) gives a general principle, which appears to refer to the *outward* conformity and disposition of a person; whereas Matt. xii. 30, relates to *inward* motive and unity of purpose. Thus, for example, the parties mentioned (Phil. i. 15, 16) were, in the one sense, on the part of Paul, inasmuch as they *preached Christ* (ver. 18); and in the other, they were against Christ, because of the evil motives of their preaching (ver. 41). The smallest kindness done by any person to a believer, *in the name of Christ*, will be rewarded; whilst (ver. 42) an offence against such an one will be terribly avenged. Offence, however, may not only come from without, but may arise in the believer himself (verse

43); and it is better to lose anything in th world, as precious even as a hand or a foo than to lose *oneself* in the world to com (ver. 43-48). Verse 48 evidently refers t Is. lxvi. 24, in which passage the transgre sors are probably the followers of Antichri (see Rev. xiv. 9-11); who also seem referre to in Dan. xii. 2, as those who, at the secon coming of Christ, shall awake to shame an everlasting contempt.[1] It seems that at state seasons worshippers at Jerusalem during th millennial age will go forth (perhaps to som place near the city) and look upon the awfu spectacle of these sinners tormented in thi manner. The expression "*carcases*" is re markable. It seems to be used by way c reproach, though the bodies really are living Augustin (*De Civit. Dei*, l. xx. c. 21) suggest that the expression is not unsuitable, take in connection with the second death.[2]

[1] The Hebrew word "abhorring" (Isa. lxvi. 24) is th same as that rendered "contempt" (Dan. xii. 2); an occurs only in these two places.

[2] In Mark ix. 43, &c., "hell" is literally Gehenn that is, the Hebrew "Gai Hinnom," or *Valley of Hi nom* (Josh. xv. 8), south of Jerusalem, where the idol *trous Israelites* burned their children in sacrifice t

Verse 49. Liability to be thus "offended" implies an appreciation of the holiness of God, and a faculty of judging according to God. Now this is imparted by the Holy Spirit, who not only enables believers to separate from themselves what is of offence, but to cultivate what is acceptable to God. Such seems to be the force of the "for" in this verse. The *necessity* of thus acting will be felt, and the *power* to act thus will be given, and even to do more, *for* every one shall be salted with fire. Fire is the emblem of the Holy Ghost, with whom every believer is baptized. Here the expression is "salted," to denote that a divine savour or taste is communicated to us by the Spirit, the result of those faculties of discerning and discrimination, which, like fire, search out and resolve what is offered, appreciating what is precious, and consuming what is worthless. Thus our characters become seasoned with divine principles, and acquire qualities that render them

Molech. (2 Kings xxiii. 10, &c.) It was also called "Tophet" (*i.e.*, *Place of Burning*). In allusion to this abominable fire, the name of Gehenna came afterwards to denote the place of future punishment.

acceptable to God. With the meat-offering (type of the perfect character of the Lord Jesus) salt was always presented; and so we find in all the ways and actions of Jesus the savour of what is divine and heavenly, and never the expression of mere natural or human feeling. *We* are always imperfect: *our* characters will bear no comparison with *his:* but as the meat-offering was burned on the altar for the person who brought it; so all the sweet savour of Christ's character is reckoned to us by God; and this is our comfort under the consciousness of our deep unworthiness, and our immeasurable inferiority to that blessed One.

But not only do our *characters* receive this divine savour; it is imparted also to our *actions* and *services,* that is, when they are performed in communion with God by the power of the Holy Spirit. So it is added, "and every sacrifice shall be salted with salt." For as all believers are now priests, so all that they do should have the character of *sacrifice,* and be fit to be laid, so to speak, upon the altar. (See Phil. iv. 8; Heb. xiii. *15, 16;* 1 Pet. ii. 5.) How different this is

from acting on mere natural principles and motives! When we come short, even after our best endeavours, Christ as our High Priest supplies the deficiencies, and removes the blemishes of our works, so that they reach God with all Christ's acceptableness and fragrance attached to them. (Comp. Rev. viii. 3, 4.) The natural man cannot thus please God, for no salt can be found in a person's *actions* or *ways* before *he himself* is first salted.

Believers, also, if they descend to worldly principles, or compromise between Christ and the world, may lose their saltness (ver. 50). Instead of being the "salt of the earth," that which is incorruptible itself, and which preserves other things from corruption, they may become *tasteless* to God, and profitless to men. Such insipid characters are unfitted for the purposes either of the Church or the world. (Luke xiv. 34.) Our Lord, therefore, says, "Have salt in yourselves;" and with allusion to their dispute at the beginning (ver. 33, 34), He adds, "and have peace one with another."

THE SEPULCHRES OF THE PATRIARCHS IN SYCHEM.

Acts vii. 15, 16.

Two difficulties in this passage have so embarrassed commentators, that some have proposed alterations in the text (for which, however, there is no authority), and others have attributed to Stephen a confusion, through haste or inadvertence; an idea entirely to be repudiated, as contrary to the fact, that all Scripture is given by the inspiration of God. (2 Tim. iii. 16.)

The first difficulty is, that Stephen appears to say that Jacob was buried at Sychem;[1] whereas it is evident from Gen. l. 13, that he was buried at Machpelah; a fact, of course, well known to Stephen, and to those whom he was addressing. But this difficulty may be removed by taking verse 16 to refer to the patriarchs, with the exclusion of Jacob; a limitation of the general statement which

[1] *Joseph* was buried at Sychem (Shechem). (Ex. xiii. *19; Josh.* xxiv. 32.)

the Jews *then* would as readily and naturally supply, as we can *now*. A statement intentionally general has sometimes to be modified by some precise detail afforded elsewhere. We should not, probably, have inferred that Korah's children were preserved from the judgment on their father, and *all his house*, on reading the account in Num. xvi. 27-33; but this fact is mentioned in another place. (Ch. xxvi. 11.) We cannot, then, receive the tradition given by Josephus (*Antiq.* ii. 8, 2), that the patriarchs were buried at Hebron. It may be observed also, that there is another Jewish tradition found in the Rabbins, and in Jerome, which assigns Shechem (Sychem) as their burying place.[2]

The second difficulty is, that Stephen ascribes the purchase of this sepulchre to Abraham, and not to Jacob, as stated in Gen. xxxiii. 19. Let us suppose, however, that, although not mentioned in the Old Testament, Abraham did really buy a second burying-place, and that, by some unknown cause,

[2] Lightfoot, *Hor. Heb.* in Act. 7, 16; Wetstein, *Nov. Test.* in Act. l. c.; Hieron, Ep. 86; Epitaph, Paulæ, v. 677; Robinson's *Biblical Researches*, iii. p. 107.

he or his son was afterwards deprived of it; (property was not always then secure; see chap. xxvi. 18-21;) and that Jacob subsequently, to avoid litigation, purchased it again for a small sum, as mentioned in ch. xxxiii. 19. On this hypothesis, Stephen refers to the *original* purchase, and the passage is cleared of all embarrassment. It is quite possible that some of the same "sons of Emmor" may have been parties to both sales; for between the death of Abraham, and the purchase of the land by Jacob, is an interval of but 83 years. It is not necessary, however, to take the expression, "sons of Emmor," so strictly, for it may mean more generally his descendants. With great probability we may identify this piece of ground with that afterwards given by Jacob to his son Joseph (ch. xlviii. 22), which Jacob said he had taken by force from the Amorites,[8] who appear to have seized upon it; for, 1. It is unlikely that the patriarch would have taken any land by force of arms, to which he had no just title; though,

[8] Probably here a general name for the Canaanites, of which the Amorite was one of the most powerful *tribes*. (See Amos ii. 9, 10.)

like Abraham (ch. xiv. 14-16), he might have used force to recover his own property; and, 2. The evangelist John (iv. 5) clearly refers to Gen. xlviii. 22; while the inspired writer of Joshua xxiv. 32, referring to Jacob's purchase (Gen. xxxiii. 19), says, that the parcel of ground became the inheritance of the *children of Joseph.*

We may illustrate the above view by a consideration of Gen. xx., and xxvi. 6-11. Abraham and Isaac, who had both of them handsome wives, influenced by the same apprehension, resorted to the same equivocation, in the same place, of which either the same person, or his successor of like name, was king: they made the same excuse, and were both reproved in similar terms. (Compare xx. 9 with xxvi. 10.) Here is a singular parallelism of circumstances. Now, suppose that ch. xx. had not been handed down to us, and that a speaker in later times had alluded to *Abraham's* conduct about his wife, with respect to Abimelech, &c. With ch. xxvi. before them, doubtless some would have ascribed this to a lapse of memory, or confusion in the haste of speaking; whilst

others would have been for correcting the report of the speech, and reading Isaac for Abraham. But, suppose the correctness of the report to be unimpeachable, and that the speaker himself "spoke as he was moved by the Holy Ghost," would it be *safe* or *right* to impugn his memory, or impute to him haste or confusion? And if the matter in question were familiar to his hearers; if, moreover, they were so prejudiced against him, that they would not have been likely to allow a gross blunder to pass unnoticed, would it be *reasonable* to conclude that he did make such a blunder? Let us now suppose, that the events narrated in ch. xx. came to light unexpectedly. At once all is made clear. And thus would many other difficulties, in sacred and profane history, be cleared up, if we were in possession of *all* the circumstances. Happy is the child-like, reverential spirit, which believes implicitly in the Word of God, even in the face of deep obscurities and pressing difficulties, and is content to wait for the revelations of the day of perfect knowledge. (Ps. cxxxi.; 1 Cor. xiii. 12.)

GENESIS IV. 23, 24.

IT is a reflection calculated to check in the believer too great a devotion to the system of this world, that much that now forms part of it was originated by him who "went out from the presence of the Lord, and dwelt in the land of Nod" (*i.e., exile,* Gen. iv. 16), and by his descendants. By them the first city (ver. 17) was built; pastoral life was cultivated (ver. 20); instruments of music were invented (ver. 21); and iron and brass (copper) worked up for use. Such things may be taken up and used by the believer, in the power of redemption. In fact, they were afterwards, in some cases, consecrated to God, (Ps. xlviii. 1, 2; 2 Chron. ii. 13, 14, vii. 6; Ps. lxxviii. 70-72,) and will have a correspondency in heavenly things to come (Rev. xxi. 10, &c., vii. 17, v. 8); and it is in

the line of Cain, that we find the first specimen of Hebrew poetry:

> "Adah and Zillah, hear my voice,
> Ye wives of Lamech, hearken unto my speech;
> For I have slain a man to my wounding,
> And a young man to my hurt:
> If Cain shall be avenged sevenfold,
> Truly Lamech seventy and sevenfold."

It would seem that Lamech had killed a man in self-defence, and addressed these verses to his wives, to relieve their apprehensions for the possible consequences of this homicide. But with what object has this ancient epigram been preserved by the Holy Ghost? It is unlikely that it should have found a place amongst the few and very brief records of these times, unless it embodied some spiritual instruction. Perhaps we may discern here a specimen of the ignorant and presumptuous way in which men of the world often dogmatize about religion, and wrest the Word of God to make it suit their own views and circumstances. Cain's was a peculiar case, specially ordered by God, and could hardly, therefore, admit of com*parison* with any other, or form the founda-

tion of reasoning and concluding on other cases. Homicide was, indeed, a small thing in comparison with Cain's murder of his brother; but how could Lamech know that it would be regarded by *God* in the manner his words imply? "I am not so bad as many," is the reflection with which many a one consoles himself; and this seems to be the gist of Lamech's words. But his conclusion seems *without divine authority*, and to rest only on his own assertion, and his own *inference*. Had he lived under the law, we are certain that he would have been slain by the avenger of blood, unless he had found an asylum in a city of refuge (Num. xxxv.); and Christ is the alone refuge for salvation from lesser as well as great sins. Lamech appears to rest complacently on his own views about the relative magnitude of sins, and the manner in which God would regard and deal with them. Thus, he really falls into the "way of Cain" (Jude 11) his ancestor; substituting his own views for God's revelation; manifesting an equal ignorance of the nature of sin, God's holiness, the effects of the fall, and his own situation as a perishing

sinner; one who could only be saved, as w
Abel, *by faith*, and not by balancing, as h
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his own culpability.

But if the first poetry of which we kno
seems, as has too often been the case sinc
to have been the vehicle of error and pr
sumption, that art has also been consecrate
to God and to truth. We may see in Ps. l
by the "sweet psalmist of Israel," a ve
different estimate to Lamech's both of *s*
and *sins*, and the only means by which *a*
sin can be blotted out. The *greatest* can
forgiven, through the blood of Christ; th
least will prove fatal to him by whom th
blood is despised or neglected.

THE MARINERS OF PHŒNICIA.

The substance of an address, 1854, at the Teignmouth Anniversary of the British and Foreign Sailors' Society.

WE owe much to sailors, who not only in these days enable the Bible Society, and the other Missionary Societies, to send the Word of Life to foreign lands, but who even in very ancient times probably helped to promote the work of God, and to circulate his truth. We allude to the Phœnicians, the great maritime people of antiquity, of whose principal city, Tyre,[1] the prophet Isaiah speaks in words well applicable to our own country, as the 'dispenser of crowns, whose merchants are princes, whose traffickers are the honourable of the earth' (xxiii. 8). Colo-

[1] Much interesting information about the Phœnicians and Tyre is contained in No. 80 of the excellent series of monthly volumes by the Tract Society—*Tyre, its rise, glory, and desolation.*

nies of the Phœnicians extended all round the coast of the Mediterranean, except Italy and (partly) Greece; and their language being essentially the same as the Hebrew,[2] the knowledge of the sacred tongue in which God spake in old times to the fathers by the prophets, was very early diffused over a considerable portion of the earth. Probably, when the Old Testament was written, no other language was so extensively used; even as in later times the Greek became the most general, and was therefore employed by the Holy Ghost for the communication of the Scriptures of the new covenant. The Christian sailor who visits (besides the shores of Phœnicia itself) Malta, Sardinia, Sicily, the Balearic Islands, any of the ports in Tripoli, Tunis, Algiers, Morocco, the east and south of Spain, Cyprus, Cilicia, and the coast of the Black Sea, extending from the Bosporus to Sinope, may call to mind with interest

[2] See *Gesenii Monumenta Phœnicia.* Perhaps one of the most remarkable proofs is the inscription (among many others extant) on the Carthaginian tablet discovered at Marseilles in 1845, of which seventy-four *words,* out of ninety-four, occur in the Old Testament.

that a great and busy commercial people, that spoke the language of Abraham and Melchizedec, of Solomon and Hiram, once had in those regions either colonies or mercantile establishments. It is not impossible, nor even unlikely, that some knowledge of the revelations of God was diffused, both orally and in writing, by the medium of this widely-spread language. Phœnician vessels may, in addition to the numerous articles of traffic of which Ezekiel speaks (xxvii.), have now and then carried a portion of the Scriptures, or perhaps one or more individuals acquainted with One more worthy of worship than the Baal or Ashtoreth, which were the chief gods of their idolatrous countrymen. "Seeming traces," observes Dr. Tregelles, in the appendix to that valuable work, *The Bible of every Land* (Bagster and Co.), "were found among many nations of Scripture truths; and the Jews and early Christians alike ascribed this to knowledge borrowed in some manner from the Old Testament Scriptures, prior to the version of the LXX." The only remains of the Phœnician language (besides the books of the Old Testament) consist of inscriptions

on monuments and coins, found in the different places above-mentioned. One word there is, often used by many, who although they may be familiar with its scriptural associations, are not aware that it is remarkable for any other reason. The word that is now inscribed on many a flag, and that is printed on the cover of the "Sailors' Magazine," BETHEL—the House of God—this word is pure Phœnician, even as it is pure Hebrew. While the Tyrian would have probably understood by it the famous temple of his idol Baal, and the Hebrews of later days had reason to be ashamed of the idolatry which caused the prophet Hosea to change the word, by way of reproach, to *Beth-aven*, the house of idols (iv. 15, x. 5), it has been, as it were, naturalized amongst ourselves with its ancient patriarchal associations; and we trust that many more mariners are, by the grace of God, destined to find the place marked by the Bethel flag, what Jacob found the spot where he reposed, "none other than the house of God," and "the gate of heaven."

We have seen how the *truth* of God may have been in old time circulated by means

of sailors. We will next consider how they contributed to the *works* of God, certainly on one, and, probably, on two, memorable occasions. Among the settlements of the Phœnicians, and the places they visited, enumerated above, one has been omitted, lying on the very outskirts of the world, as it was then known to the eastern people. We read of the Cassiterides, or Tin Islands, as frequented by this enterprising race; and as the only islands in the western ocean producing *tin* are the British Isles, the name must have indicated either the Scilly Islands or the coast of Cornwall, or, probably, both. (Tregelles.) "The Tyrian flag," says Humboldt (*Cosmos*, vol. ii. p. 32), "waved at the same time in Britain and in the Indian Ocean." In all probability St. Michæl's Mount, in Cornwall, was the chief spot where the vessels of Tyre were moored to receive their cargoes of tin ore, which they brought home by the Straits of Gibraltar and the Mediterranean. (*Tyre*, p. 56.) Tin and copper mixed form bronze, so extensively used by the ancients. Brass, which is made of copper and zinc, is a modern composition. No ancient works in *brass*,

properly so called, have been discovered. By the "brass," therefore, of Scripture, must either be meant copper, as in Deut. viii. 9, or bronze; and the laver, and altar of burnt-offering, with other things in the tabernacle, if not of pure copper, had probably a portion of tin in them. The latter supposition may appear the more likely, as the laver was made of Egyptian mirrors (Ex. xxxviii. 8), many of which still exist in our museums, and are of mixed metals, chiefly copper. The connection is thus interesting between Cornish miners, Phœnician traders, and some of the vessels of the sanctuary. Tin is also expressly enumerated among the spoils of the Midianites. (Num. xxxi. 22.) It is one of the rarest metals in the globe, and as the ancients knew of no other tin but that of Cornwall, it is manifest how early must have been the Phœnician connection with this country. Indeed, the ancients considered for ages that the Phœnicians were the only people who knew where these islands were situated. (Tregelles.) If tin was used in the tabernacle, it may have been also for the temple of Solomon. (1 Kings vii. 14, 47.) It is certain that Phœ-

nician sailors lent a hand to the work of this edifice, for the cedar wood of Lebanon was floated down the coast by them to Joppa. (2 Chron. ii. 16.) They also went with the servants of Solomon to Ophir (1 Kings x. 22; 2 Chron. viii. 18), by which many understand India; voyages which occupied three years each, to fetch from thence for the king gold and other rarities. It was most likely, also, by means of the Phœnician trade, that the prophecies of Jacob and Moses about Zebulon were fulfilled (Gen. xlix. 13; Deut. xxxiii. 18, 19), which assigned to that tribe the shore of the sea, and foretold that it should "suck of the abundance of the sea, and hidden treasures of the sand." In this manner the advantages and "abundance" of the sea, and precious things, as gold and gems extracted from the sands of foreign lands, may have been brought to them.

An interesting crew of Phœnician seamen is brought to our notice in the book of Jonah. The prophet's disobedience endangered the lives of all on board; the opposite of the apostle Paul's case, who was the means of saving all that sailed with him. (Acts

xxvii. 24, &c.) The mariners, who at first had "cried every man unto his God," after that Jonah had told them of the God whom *he* worshipped, cried unto *Jehovah* (i. 14), and upon their deliverance, "offered a sacrifice unto Jehovah, and made vows." How ready would these men have been to welcome such a thing as a Bethel service! and who can say that they did not become, as some of our own pious sailors have not unseldom proved, messengers of salvation to others? The excellent and earnest spirit they manifested throughout the whole scene, and their devotion afterwards, for they "feared the Lord exceedingly," lead us to hope (in the silence of Scripture) the best things of them. As to a Bethel, it may be observed that, if there had been a disposition on the part of any Phœnicians to avail themselves of it, Tyre was not above a hundred miles from the grandest that ever existed, and one not built either without reference to Gentile strangers (1 Kings viii. 41-43); a house that might have been "a house of prayer for all people." (Isa. lvi. 7.) But though the Phœnicians made voyages to the uttermost parts

of the earth, in pursuit of wealth, few, it is to be feared, cared to make but a little journey to Jerusalem, or even to seek a knowledge of God from the tribes of Israel adjacent to their own land. Their final ruin, owing to their pride and many iniquities, is minutely described by the Hebrew prophets. Yet though their sin was great, it was exceeded by that of others, who, living in the midst of the greatest religious privileges, and professing to be worshippers of the true God, continued unchanged in their hearts. "Woe unto thee, Chorazin! woe unto thee, Bethsaida! for if the mighty works which were done in you had been done in Tyre and Sidon, they would have repented long ago in sackcloth and ashes. But I say unto you, It shall be more tolerable for Tyre and Sidon at the day of judgment, than for you." (Matt. xi. 21, 22.) Let all, both sailors and landsmen, ponder well these memorable words. Let them fear to despise or neglect the opportunities afforded them, either afloat or ashore, of attaining to that salvation which is freely afforded, on the alone condition of faith in the atoning blood of the Son of God, lest a

neglected responsibility, greater too in this case than in that of Tyre and Sidon, render the final doom of the idolatrous Phœnician cities "more tolerable" also than theirs.

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